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**Seven sages of
Rome**

**The history of the
seven wise masters
of Rome**

**London
1697**

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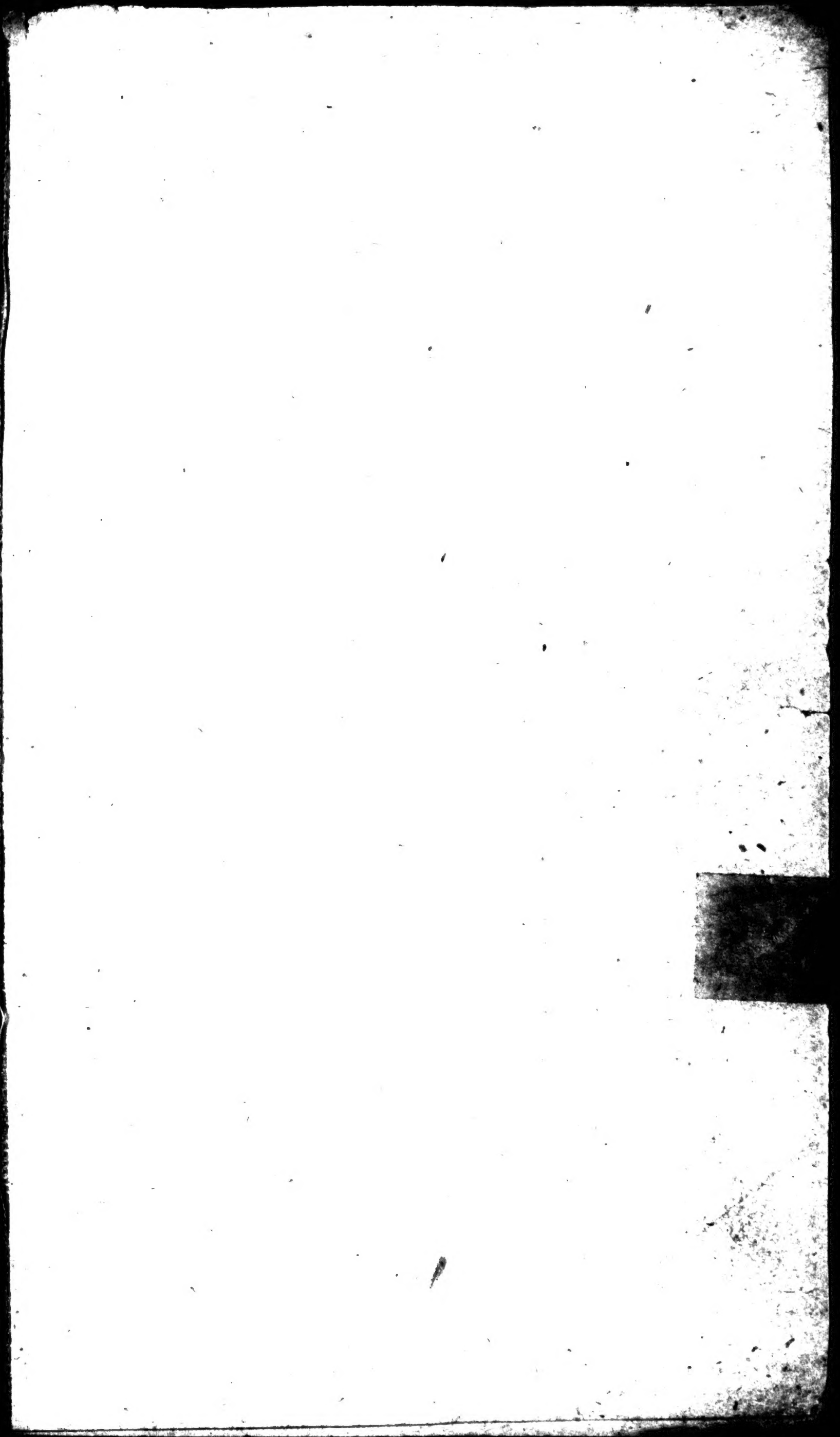
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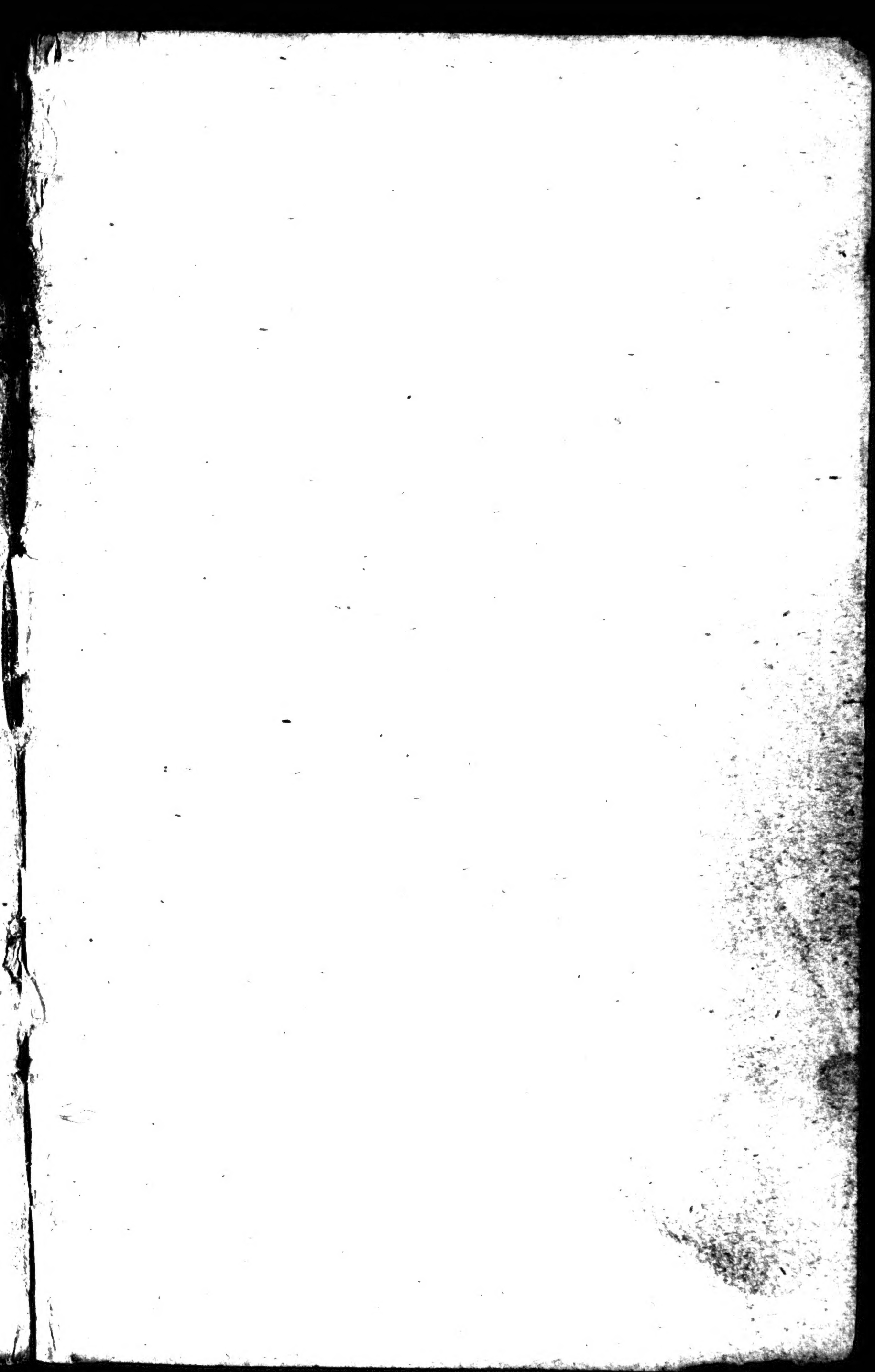
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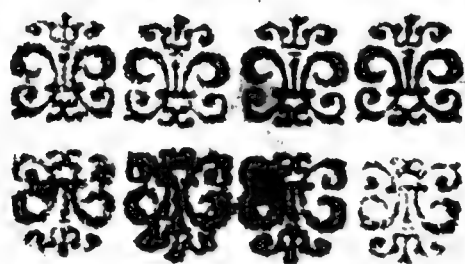




THE
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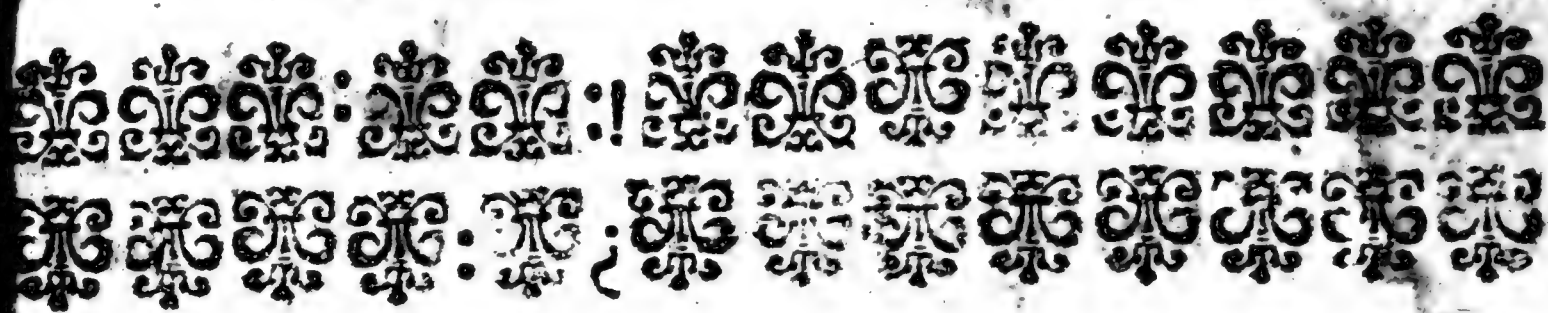


LONDON:

Printed by J. W. for G. Conyers, at
the Golden King, in Little-Bri-
tain, 1697.

DAMAGED PAGE(S)





To the Reader.

FOR thy better Delight, and more plainly to set forth the History to thy view, I have to my great cost added many Pictures, lively expressing the most material Points of mine. If I may receive Thanks, I think it a sufficient Reward. The story of it self is both Ancient and Moral, containeth in it much Learning.

When Ignorance, having a thick and dull Ear, blinded most People, Men were compelled to draw the rude Multitude to Attention of good Instruction by such pleasing Allurement of Tales and Fables, as in this Book is set down; that as the Mind is fed and delighted with the sweetness of Fabulous Stories, the Soul it self at the end (by often tasting the same Nourishment) grows quicker-sighted; to behold the hidden and mystical Wisdom contained under such close Riddles. For in few Words, to give you the meaning of this Moral, it is thus: The Emperor may signifie the World, who having but one only Son, (who is Man) him to bring well up is all his Care. But Man losing his own Mother, (who is Reason or Divine Grace) falling into the hand of the Stepmother

To the Reader.

mother, (signifying *Sin*) who is an Empress of great bewitching, and one that commands the World : She works by all possible means the confusion of Man, and would prevail against his weakness, but that a Star from Heaven, (by which is meant Goodness from above) instructs Man how to avoid the Allurements of Sin, by not opening his mouth to bid her welcome. And the better to prevent her mischief, he hath *Seven Wise Masters*, which are the Seven Liberal Sciences, to give him wholesom Instructions, and by those helps save him from mortal danger. So that being thus armed, Man liveth to batter down Sin, (figured by the death of the Empress and her Minion) and in the end to gain a Rich Crown of Glory and Happiness, set ready for all those that in this Life labour to attain to Heaven by doing well.

This is the Explanation of the Moral ; of which if thou make right use, it will be a rich Banquet to thy Soul. Farewel.

Here

Here Beginneth the

HISTORY OF THE

Seven Wise Masters of *Rome*.

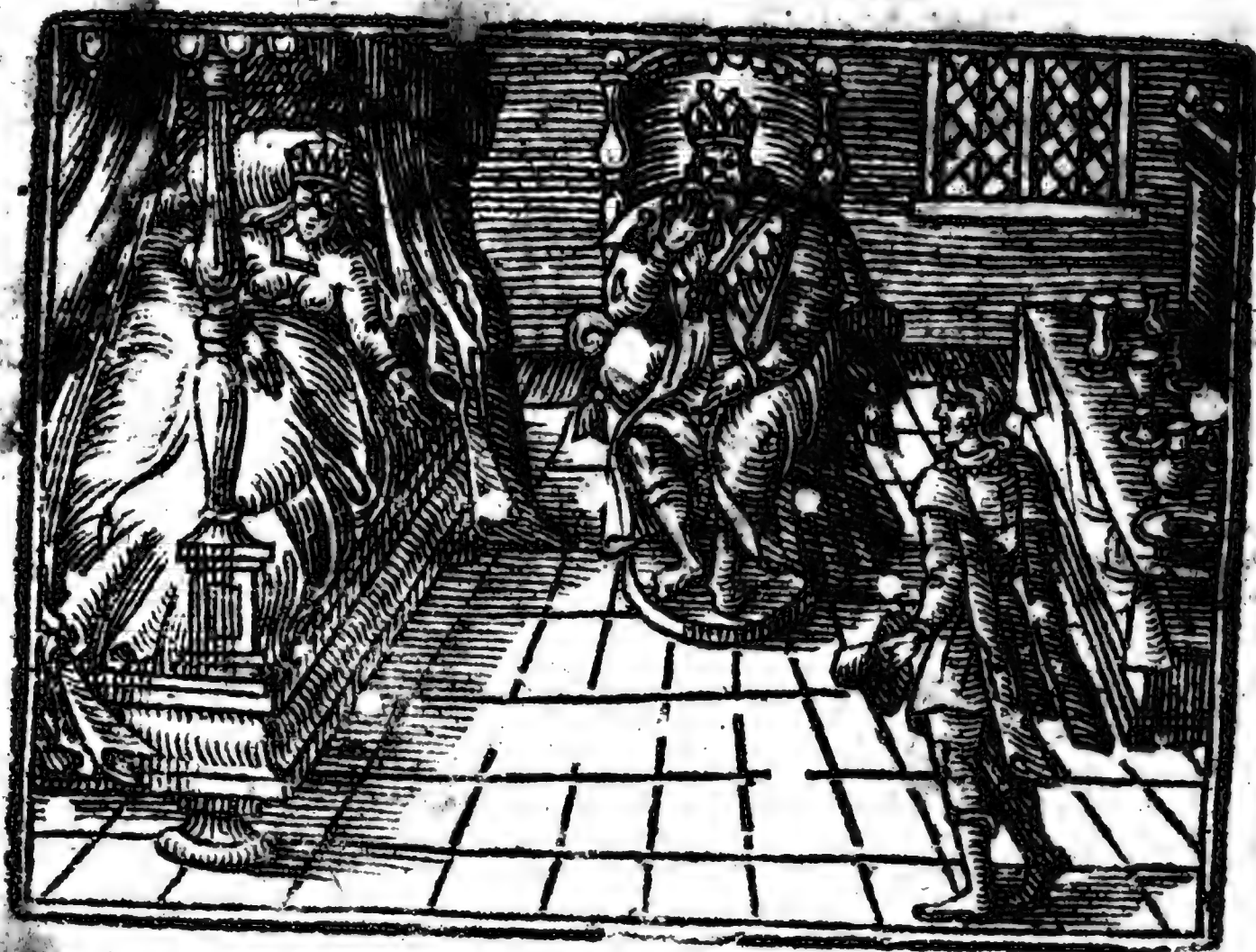
Containing many Pleasant and Witty
Narrations, very delightful to Read.

The Entrance into the Moral, (which according
to things of Comick Pleasure) properly be-
gins with a Funeral.

Sometime in the City of Rome there was a
Famous Emperoz named Pontianus, a Man
of great Wisdom, he took to his Wife a King's
Daughter that was very fair and amiable, to all
People gracious, and to her Husband right dear:
she conceived by him, and was delivered of a
Son named Dioclesian. The Child grew apace,
and of all People was beloved: and when he was
of the age of seven Years, his Mother the Em-
press falling sick, and feeling her self that she might
not live, sent after her Lord the Emperoz (being
rode forth on Progress) a Messenger, that he should
return without tarrying, if ever he would see her
alibe.

And when he was come, she said unto him, O
my dear Lord, of this Sicknes I may not escape,

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wherefore the natural and tender Love and Care that is to me, towards you and your Son makes a suit to you before my Death. He replied, desire what you will, I shall not deny you any thing. Then said she, after my Death you will take another Wife, as is most convenient: wherefore, I beseech you, that she over my Son have no power, but that he be nourished far from her, and trained up in Learning. The Emperour answered, My most dear Wife, your Petition in all things shall be performed. Then turned the Emperess and gave up the Ghost. Many days after, the Emperour bewailed her Death, and long after shewed his heaviness, and would in no wise be joyful.

How the Emperor committed and delivered his Son to Seven VVise Masters to be Instructed in Learning.

UPon a time as the Emperour lay in his Bed, he thought himself inwardly of his Son, saying

ing in his Heart, I have but one only Son, the
 which shall be my Heir: it is good while he is
 Young, that he is set to learn Cunning and Wis-
 dom, by which he may after my Death govern and
 rule the Empire; intimating thereby, that a you-
 thy Prince taking upon him too great a weight
 and Charge, as the Government, of a Kingdom,
 ought first to learn to be his own Governour, and
 to master his own Affections. So that when he
 was early risen up from his Bed, he caused to be
 called the Lords of his Council before him, and
 of them took Advice what were best therein to be
 done. And they answered, Lord, in Rome are
 Seven Wise Masters, who live in very great
 Fame for their Excellency in Arts, great Counsel,
 and Instructions; let them be sent for, and deliver
 them your Son to be fostered and instructed in
 Learning. The Emperour understanding that,
 sent his Letters made powerful by his own Seal,
 to the Seven Wise Masters, that they should come
 to him without delay: They anon came before the
 Emperour, and he demanded of them, if they knew
 wherefore he had sent for them? they answered,
 The cause is as your Will intendeth, we know not,
 but if it please th you to shew us your Mind, we be
 ready to fulfil it to the utmost of our Powers. To
 whom the Emperour said, I have but one Son,
 which I shall deliver to you to confirm in all good
 ways of Learning and Vertue, so that by your
 Doctrine and Wisdom he may more wisely govern
 the Empire after my decease.

The first Master named Pontillas, said, Lord de-

The Seven VVife

liber me your Son, and I shall teach him as much cunning within seven Years, as I and all my fellows can.



Then spake the second Master, named Lentulus, Sir, of long time, I have serbed you, and hitherto have had no reward: I demand nothing of you, but that you deliver me your Son to govern, and I shall make him as cunning within six Years as I and all my fellows.

The third Master, named Craton, said, My Lord, many times I have been with you on the Sea, in perill of my life, and have had no manner of reward: if I might for my recompence, obtain that you would vouchsafe to commit your Son under my Governance, I should inform him as much within five years, if his Wit will thereto attain, as I and all my fellows can.

Then stood up the fourth Master, named Malquidrack, who was right lean of Body, and said, My Lord,

Lord, remember I and all my Predecessors have served Emperors, and received no reward, therefore I ask no other thing, but that you deliver me your Son to teach, and I shall make him take as much Science and Wisdom within four Years as I and all my fellows have learned in all our lives.

Then spake the fifth Master, that was named Josephus, Lord, I am old, and many times am called to your Council, and you know that my Counsel hath profited you, and so likewise may I do hereafter; yet I desire no more, but that you deliver me your Son, and I shall instruct him in as much Cunning and Science, that he within three Years shall be prompt in Wit, as much as I and all my fellows have.

Then came the sixth Master, named Cleophes, who said like to the other, promising to inform the Child in all their Cunning in two Years.

The Seventh Master also desired the Child, and promised to teach him within one Year, the Sciences and Wisdom of them all.

When all this was done, the Emperor said, My trusty Friends, I am very much bound to thank you all, and every one of you, for that you have so earnestly desired to foster and instruct my Son: if I should now commit him to one and not to another, thereupon would ensue much dissention among you: Therefore to you all, and every of you, I commit my Son to be nourished and taught. The Masters hearing this, expressing both their greatness of Joy, and forwardness in will to the Emperor,

The Seven Wise

for, all with one harmony of Consent received his Son, and led him towards the Court of Rome. Upon the way, spake Craton to his fellows; If we this Child should teach within the City of Rome, there is so great resort and concourse of People, that it would hinder him in Learning; I know a fair place, from Rome some two Miles, right pleasant and delectable, there let us make a four-square Chamber of Stone, and put him therein; and upon the Walls thereof, let us paint and write the Seven Liberal Arts, so that the Child all times may see and behold his Doctrine therein, as well as in his Book. This advice pleased them all, and was done accordingly in every point: the Masters diligently every day, during seven Years, taught and instructed the Child, and determined among themselves, and said, It is good that we examine our Disciple, to see at what perfection our pains hath arrived, and what strength and growth his vertue and knowledge is come to: and they all wisely and Religiously accorded to that Counsel: then said Master Pontillas, How shall we probe him: Craton said, Let every one of us as he sleepeth, put under every corner of his Bed, an Olive leaf, and then we shall know if he perceived or felt any thing, or not: this done, he awaking, greatly marvelled and lifted up his Eyes towards the roof of the Chamber fervently. The Masters seeing that, said, Wherefore lift you up your Eyes so sharply? he answered, It is no marvel; for in my sleep I saw the uppermost part of my Chamber inclined towards the Earth, or else under me it was lifted up: the Masters hear-

ing

ing this, said amongst themselves, If this Child live,
he shall be a Man of great Cunning and Fame.
How the Emperor by the Counsel of the great Prin-
ces and Lords of his Empire, wedded ano-
ther VVife.

The Princes and great Lords of the Empire
in the mean time, came to the Emperour and
said, My Lord ye have only one Son, it is possible
he might die, therefore it were profitable that you
would wed another Wife, that thereby your Joyes
and Hopes may be blest with far more certainty
and assured Happines in your Race and Issue, to
the intent, that the Empire of Rome be not left
without an Heir. Moreover, you are so mighty, that
if it should happen you to get many Children, you
may promote and advance them all to great Dig-
nities and Lordships. Whereupon answered the
Emperour, It is your Counsel, that I shall take ano-
ther Wife: then seek me one that is gracious, a
pure Virgin, faire and gentle born, and then I shall
follow your Counsel and Advice. They went and
sought and search'd out many Kingdoms and Coun-
tries; and at the last they found the King's Daugh-
ter of Castile, that was right faire and beautiful, and
her they gave the Emperour to Wife; who beha-
ved her self so well, that anon he was so greatly
taken in her Love, that he forgot all the sorrow of
Heart he had taken for the Death of his first Wife.
And when they had lived long together without
any Children, and when the Emperours saw that she
might not Conceive, when she heard the Empe-
rour had a Son with the Seven Wise Masters, to
be fostered and taught, to the great good and pro-
fit

The Seven Wise

At of the Empire, she thought in her self, and wished his Death, and from that very hour imagined how she might conspire his Destruction. It happened on a Night as the Emperoz lay in his Bed, he said unto the Empress: My most dear and best beloved Wife, I shall now open to you the secrets of my heart, for under the Sun there is no Creature that I love so well as you, and therefore trust in my Love.

Then said the fair Empress, if it be so as you say, I require of you one Boon or Petition. Desire what you will said the Emperoz, and all that in me is possible, I shall fulfill and give it you. Then said the Empress, My dear Lord, you know I have no Child by you yet conceived, for which I am sore pensive and heavy; but Fame, that never conceals it self long to true Joy, hath delivered this happy truth to me, that you have one Son only, the which is sent to the Seven Wise Masters to be taught and govern'd, and him I hold and require for my own Son: wherefore I beseech you send for him, that I may see him, and have consolation of his Presence, as though he were mine own. Hereupon answered the Emperoz, It is sixteen Years past since I saw him, your Will shall be fulfilled. Incontinent the Emperoz sent unto the Seven Wise Masters a Letter, seal'd with his secret Sign, that upon pain of Death they should bring his Son in the Feast of Pentecost following. How the Seven Wise Masters, after the sight of the Emperor's Letter, would first observe the Course and divine foreshewing of the Firmament,

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ment, and Planets, whether it were good to obey his Commandments or not.



AND when the Masters by the Letter had understood the Emperors Will, in the night they went and beheld the Stars in the Firmament, whether it would be expedient to bring the Child to the Emperors or not; and they saw clearly in the Stars, that if they should lead the Child in that time assigned, at the first Word he should speak, he should die an evil Death; wherefore they were all very sorry: and as they beheld another Star, they saw, that if they delibered not the Child at the day aforesaid, they should lose their Heads. Then said one of them, Of two Evils the least is to be chosen, it is better that all we die, than that the Child should lose his Life: therefore that we may save the Childs Life, let us go to the Emperors. And as they were thus sorrowful, the Child came down from his

The Seven VVise

his Chamber, and seeing his Masters so heaby, he demanded the cause of their heavyness: whereunto they answered, Sir, we have receyved your Fathers Letters, that upon pain of Death, now this high Feast of Pentecost, we shall lead you to your Country; whereupon we have beholden the Firmament, wherein we clearly find, that if we (within the time prefixed) present you to your Father, at the first Word ye shall pronounce out of your Mouth, ye shall be to the most vilest Death condemned. Then said the Child, I must also behold the Firmament with the Stars: and so he did, and found clearly in a little Star, that if he could abstain from speaking seven Days, he should preserve and save his Life. And after he had seen this, called his Masters and shewed them the Star, and said, Behold my dear Masters, I see perfectly in the Star, that if I abstain my self seven Days, I shall save my Life. We are now Seven Masters the wisest of all the World, it is an easie thing for you, every of you for me to answer, and with your wise Answer every of you his Day, my Life may save and keep; and in the eighth Day I shall speak my self, and save my Life, and all you from Peril: As the Masters did behold that certain Star, they thought with them selves, that the Child had said truth, saying, Almighty God be thanked that the Wisdom and Cunning of our Disciple exceeded us all. Then said the first Master Pontillas, Lord, I shall speak for you the first Day, and save your Life, and Lentulus the second Master said, I shall for you the second Day answer: and so consequent-

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ly every of them promised to answer for himself his day: and this said, they cloathed the Child in Purple, leaped on Horseback with a fair Company, and hastned with the Child to the Emperoz. How the Emperoz rode to meet his Son coming from Study, with Joy, Solemnity and Triumph.



When the Emperoz perceived that his Son was coming on the way, he rode with great Joy to meet him, and the Masters understanding the coming of the Emperoz, said unto the Child, It is best that we depart, that in the meanwhile we may provide how we may save your Life. The Child said, it pleaseth me well that you do so, but have mind of me in my necessity: so they took leave and departed towards the City, and the Child came after, accompanied most honourably. And as he and his Father the Emperoz met, for Joy he took his Son about the Neck and kissed him, and

The Seven VVise

and said, My dear Son, now is my joy compleat, behold in thee the treasure of my Life's comfort. How is it with you, it is long since that I saw you. He bowed down his Head and answered nothing. The Father had great wonder why he spake not, and thought in himself that his Masters had informed him so, that he riding, should not speak. And when they were come into the Palace, and were descended from their Horses, the Father took the Son by the Hand and led him into the Hall, and set him next him, and beheld him, and said, Tell me how how it is with your Masters, How have they instructed you these many Years since I saw you? But he bowed down his Head again, and speak not. The Father said, Wherefore speak ye not to me? When the Emperess heard that the Emperors Son was come, she was right joyous, and said, I will go see him. She apparelled her self with rich Attire, and took with her two of her Gentlewomen, and went whereas the Emperer was sitting with his Son, and set her down by the Child; and she said to the Emperer, Is this your Son, that hath been nourished with the Seven Wise Masters? and he said, It is my Son, but he speaketh not. She said, Deliber to me your Son, and if ever he speak, I shall make him. Then said the Emperer, rise and go with her. The Son did Reuerence to his Father as though he said, I am ready to accomplish your Will; and so he went with her.

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Now the Empress led Dioclesian, the Emperor's Son, with her into a Chamber, to make good Cheer with him, the which he withstood.

The Empress led him with her into the Chamber, and commanded all others to avoid, and set him by her, before her Bed-Chamber, and said, O my best beloved Dioclesian! I have heard much of your Person and Beauty; but now I am glad that I may see that which my heart coveteth and loveth: for I have caused your Father to send for you, that I might have solace and joy of your Person: wherefore right heartily I give you knowledge, That I for your Love unto this day have kept my Virginity; speak to me therefore, and let us go to Bed together. But he gave her no answer. She seeing that, said unto him, O good Dioclesian, which hath the half of my Soul, why speak ye not to me? or at least shew me some token of thy Love: What shall I do? speak to me, I am ready to perform your Will. And when she had thus said, she embraced him, and would have kissed his Mouth, but he turned his Visage from her, and in no wise would consent. Then she said again, O Son, wherefore do you thus with me? let us sleep together; and then shall ye perceive, that for your Love, I have kept my Virginity: But he turned his Visage again from her; he seeing that of her he was ashamed, shewing unto him her naked Body and Breasts, saying, Behold, my Son, what Body I have, it is at your Will, a Servant at your pleasure: give me your consent, or it shall be for me to depart hence in my right Mind. He answered

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her no manner of Love, but as much as he could
withdrew himself from her. When she saw that
she said, O my best Son, if it please you not to con-
sent unto me (yet speak) perhaps for some reason-
nable Cause! Lo, here is Pen, Ink, and Paper
then write your Will, whether I may at any time
hereafter trust in your Love, or not. The Child
wrote as followeth. O Lady, God forbid that I
should defile my Father's Orchard: For I wot not
what Fruit I should have of it. I know well that I
should sin greatly in the sight of God, and also run in
the Malediction of my Father; and therefore from
henceforth I pray you provoke me no more thereto.

When she had seen and read the Writing, she
tore it with her Teeth, and rent her Cloaths to
her Pabel, and cast from her all the Ornamentes
of her Head, and cryed with a loud voice, Come
hither my Lords and help me, lest this rude and
evil body shame and ravish me.

How the Empress complained to the Emperor,
of the shame done unto her by his Son.

The Emperor being in the Hall, and hearing
the cry of the Empress, hastily run toward
her Chamber, with many of his Knights and Ser-
vants following him, to know the matter. Then
began the Empress to cry and speak to the Em-
peror in this wise: O my Lord have pity on me,
behold this young Man is not your Son, but the
foulest for Ribaldry and Actions of Luxury that e-
ver was and has put strength into; for as you
know I led him into the Chamber, and would
have

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have exhorted and caused him to have spoken; I have done as much therefore as I can or may; and whilst I moved him to have spoken, he hath endeavoured himself with me to have sinned; and because I would not consent, but withstood as much as I might to stie the same, he hath made my visage all bloody; and torn my Vesture and Ornaments off my Head, as you may see; and if you had not soon come unto my calling, he had ended in me his most foul and wicked Appetite. When the Emperour saw and heard this (filled with great malice and woodness) he commands his servant to lead him to the Gallows and hang him. When the Lords heard thereof, they said, Lord, you have put this Son only, it is not good that ye thus hastily put him to death: The Law is ordained for Transgressors; and if he must die, let him by the Law die, lest it be said, That the Emperour in his wrath, (without Law or Justice) had put his only Son to death. As the Emperour heard this, he commanded him to be put in Prison till Judgment was given against him. When the Emperess understood that the Child was not put to death she wept bitterly, and would take no rest. When Night came, the Emperour entered into his Chamber to go to Bed and found his Wife sorrowing: To whom he said, O my dear Lady, for what cause are ye sorrowful? she answered, Know ye not that your accepted Son hath done me so much shame, and dishonoured you, that you commanded him to be hanged, and yet he liveth, and your word is not performed: how may my shame be revenged? The morrow said

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the Emperour he shall die by the Law. Then said she, Shall he so long live? Then might it happen to you as it did to a Burgess of Rome, of whom an Example is mentioned; The Emperour said, I pray you shew me this Example: That shall I do gladly, says the Emperess.

The first Example of the Emperess.

In the City of Rome was a Burgess, which had a fair Garden, wherein he had a noble Tree, the which every Year brought forth Fruit of good Virtue; for whosoever eat thereof that were sick of any manner of Sicknes, or Leprosie, he should soon be whole, and receive sight.



It happened on a day, as the Burgess went into the Garden to visit the Tree, he espied under the Tree a fair young Imp, and called to him the Gardiner, and said, My Friend, of this young Imp I give thee charge, for I trust of that to plant a better Tree than this is. The Gardiner said, I shall do gladly

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gladly do. Another time the Burgesses came again into the Garden to visit the young Plant, and he appeared unto him that it grew not so much as it should do; and he said to the Gardener, How may this be? and he said, It is no wonder; for this great Tree hath so great Arms and Branches, that the Air may not come to the Root of the young Tree. Then said the Burgesses, Cut and hew off the Arms and the Boughs, that the Air may come thereto. The Gardiner did as he commanded. The Burgesses came again another time to see the young Plant, and thought that it grew never the better; and said to the Gardiner, What is it that letteth not this Plant to grow now? and he said, I suppose the height of the old Tree letteth the Sun, that the Rain may not come thereto, and therefore it cannot grow. Then said the Master unto him, Hew down that Tree to the ground; for I hope of this Plant to have a better than ever this was. The Gardiner hearing his Master, hewed down the Tree, and as soon as this was done, the young Plant perished, and came to nought: wherefore there came great harm; for when the poor sick People perceived that the Tree was destroyed, they cursed all them that were counsellors and helpers thereto, by the which they were oftentimes healed and cured of their Infirmities: Then said the Empress to her Lord, Understand ye what I have said? He answered, Yea, right well: Then said she, I will declare the meaning of that I have said.

The Seven Wise

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M A S T E R S.

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The Declaration of the Example.

This Tree, my Lord, betokeneth your most noble Person, how that with your counsel and help, many poore and sick Folks are greatly comforted; and the young Imp which is grown under the great Tree, is your accursed Son that now by cunning beginneth to grow, and studieth first how he might cut off the Arms and Boughs of your Might, and how to win him the Land and Favour of the People; yea, and more unnaturally, imagineth to destroy your Person, that he may himself Reign; But what shall then ensue thereof? All poore and feeble People shall curse them who might have destroyed your Son, and have not yet done it: Therefore I counsel you, while you are in Power, that you destroy him, lest the Curse of the People fall upon you. Then said the Emperour, We have given me good Counsel, to Morrow I shall condemn him to the vilest Death that can be thought upon. When the Day was, the Emperour went and sat in Judgment, and commanded his Servants to lead his Son to be hanged, with Trumpets sounding in token of Death. As the Emperour's Son was lead through the City, the common People began to weep and cry, Alas! the only Son of the Emperour is led towards his Death. And therewithal came Pantillas the first Master riding upon a Horse. When the Child saw him he bowed his Head, as though he said, Mind me when you come before my Father: See how I am led toward the Gallows. Then the Master said to the Servants, Make no haste; for I hope, b

the Grace of God, this day to deliver him from Death. Then said all the People, O good Master, haste you to the Palace, and leave your Disciple. He smote his horse with his Spurs, till he came to the Palace, and kneel'd to the Emperour, and did him reverence. To whom the Emperour said, It shall never be to thy good, who answered, I have deserved a better Reward. The Emperour said, Thou lyest; for I delivered my Son to thee well mannered, and now he is brought home dumb, and hath sought to work his Will, to the shame of my vertuous Emperess, and the dishonour of his Father's Bed for ever; therefore this day shall he die; and ye shall die a shameful Death. Then said the Master, Lord, forasmuch as your Son speaketh not, the Cause whereof God knoweth, and without cause it is not, as you shall understand; and whereas you say, That he would have committed the sin of enforcement on your Emperess, I shall say to you of a truth, he hath been in our Company to the space of sixteen Years, and we never could perceive such abuse by him: Therefore my dear Lord, I shall shew you one thing, that if you put your Son to Death for the Words of your Wife, it shall happen to you worse than to a Knight that killed his best Grey-hound (through the Words of his Wife) which saved his Son from Death. Then said the Emperour to the Master, Tell me that Example: The Master said, Lord, that shall I not do, for before I shall end, your Son might be dead, and then without hope shall I rehearse it: but if it please you this noble Example to hear, call again your

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your Son till to morrow; and as you think by reason, then do with him your pleasure. As the Emperour heard that, anon he willed the Child to be called again: and in the mean time he sent him to Prison, while the Master finished his Tale; and then began in this manner following.

The first Example of the First Master.

There was a valiant Knight had one only Son as you have, which he loved so much that he ordained for his Keepers three Nourishers; the first should give him suck, and feed him; the second wash him, and keep him clean; and the third should bring him to his sleep and rest. The Knight had also a Grey-hound and a Faulcon, which he also loved right well. The Grey-hound was so good, that he never ran at any Game, but he took it, and held it till his Master came. And if his Master was disposed to go to any Battel, if he could not speed therein, anon as he should mount his Horse, the Grey-hound would take his Horsetail in his Mouth, and draw backward, and cry and howl marvellously loud. By these signs, and the observations thereof, the Knight did always understand that his Journey should have very ill success. The Faulcon was so gentle and hardy, that he was never cast off to his Prey, but he took it.

The same Knight had great pleasure in Jousting and Tourney, so that upon a time, under his Castle he proclaimed a Tournament, to the which came many great Lords and Knights. The Knight entered into the Tourney, and his Lady went with her Maidens to see it, and as they went out, after

went

went the Nourishers, and left the Child lying in the Cradle in the Hall, where the Grey-hound lay near the Wall, and the Hawk or Faulcon standing upon a perch. In this Hall there was a Serpent lurking, to all them of the Castle unknown, which when he perceived they were all absent, he put his head out of his hole ; and when he saw none but the Child in the Cradle, he went out of his hole towards the Cradle to have slain the Child.



The noble Faulcon perceiuing that, and beholding the Grey-hound that was sleeping, made such rustling with her Wings, that the Grey-hound awaked and rose up ; and when he saw the Serpent near the Child, anon against him he leaped, and they both fought so long, that the Serpent had grievously wounded the Grey-hound, that he bled so sore, that the earth about the Cradle was bloody. The Grey-hound, when he felt himself grievously wounded, starts fiercely upon the Serpent, and

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and fought so sore and eagerly, that betwixt them the Cradle was overtost, with the Child, the bottom upward, and the Cradle having four Hummels which it fell upon, they saved the Child from having any hurt: What can be more exprest to make good the wonder in this preservation of the Child: With great pain the Grey-hound slew the Serpent, laid him down again in his place, and licked his wounds. Anon after, as the Juits and Tourney was done, the Nourishers came first into the Castle, and saw the Cradle turned the up side down upon the earth, compassed round about with blood, and the Grey-hound also bloody, and said among themselves, that the Grey-hound had slain the Child, and were not so wise to turn up the Cradle again with the Child, to see what was befallen; and said, Let us run away, lest that our Master should lay the blame upon us and slay us. Running away, they met the Knight's Wife, and she said unto them, Wherefore make ye this sorrow? And whither will you run? Then they said, O Lady, woe be to us, and to you! Why, said she, what is happened? shew me. The Grey-hound, they said, that our Lord and Master loved so well, hath devoured and slain your Son, and lieth by the Wall full of Blood. As the Lady heard this, she presently fell to the earth, and began to weep piteously, and said, Alas! O, my dear Son! are ye thus slain? What shall I now do, that I have mine only Son thus lost? Herewithal came in the Knight from the Tourney, beholding his Lady crying, he demanded wherefore she made so great lamentation?

answered

answered: O, my Lord, the Grey-hound you lo-
 ved so much, hath slain your only Son, and lieth
 by the Wall satiated with the blood of the Child!
 The Knight, exceeding angry, went into the Hall;
 the Grey-hound arose to meet him, and did fawn
 upon him as he was wont: But the Knight drew
 out his Sword, and with one stroke smote off the
 Grey-hound's head. Then he went to the Cradle
 where the Child lay, and found his Son whole,
 and by the Child the Serpent lay slain, and by di-
 vers signs perceived the Grey-hound had killed
 the Serpent for the defence of the Child. Then
 with great sorrow he tore his hair, and said, Woe
 is me, that for the words of my Wife I have slain
 my best Grey-hound, which hath saved my Child's
 Life, and slain the Serpent: therefore I will put
 my self to penance. And so he brake his sword in
 three pieces, and went toward the Holy-Land, and
 abode there all the Days of his Life. Then said
 the Master to the Emperor, Lord, understand ye
 what I have said? and he answered, Right well.
 The Master said, If you put your Son to death
 for the words of your Wife, it shall happen to
 you worse than it did to the Knight for his Grey-
 hound. The Emperor said, You have shewn me a
 fair Example; without doubt this Day my Son
 shall not die. Then said the Master, If you do
 so, you do wisely; and I thank you that you have
 spared him this Day for my sake.

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The second Complaint of the Empress : A Sorrow mingled with much cunning and falshood.

When the Empress heard the Child was not yet dead, she began to weep bitterly, and late her down on the Earth in ashes, and would not lift up her head. When the Emperour heard that, he entred the Chamber, and said unto her, O good Wife, wherefore make you all this sorrow, and trouble your self so much? She said, Ask ye that of me! Know ye not what shame I have suffered of your unhappy Son? And ye have promised me, that you would see Justice to be thereupon executed on him, and yet he libeth! Of a truth it will happen to you as to a Shepherd and a Boar. The Emperour said, I pray you shew me that Example for my learning. She said, Yesterday I shewed you one, and saw no good effect that came thereof: To what end shall I now do the like? Nevertheless I shall declare this noble Example unto you, as hereafter you shall hear.

The second Example of the Empress.

There was sometime an Emperour which had a great Forrest, wherein was a wild Boar so cruel and fierce, that he devoured Men going through the Forrest. The Emperour therefore being right heavy, proclaimed through his Dominions, That whosoever could slay the Boar, should have his only Daughter to his Wife, and the Empire after his death. As this was in all places proclaimed, there was not one Man found that durst
gibe

give the adventure. But there was a Shepherd, who thought in himself, might I the Boar overcome and slay, I should not only advance myself, but also my generation and kindred. So he took his Shepherd's Staff in his hand, went to the Forrest; and as the Boar had of him a sight, he went towards the Herdsman; but he, for fear, climbed into a Tree, and then the Boar began to bite and gnaw the Tree, so that the Herd thought shortly he would have overthrew it. This Tree was laden



with plenty of fruit, and the Herd gathered thereof, and cast them to the Boar, insomuch that when he was filled therewith, he laid him down to sleep: Which when the Herd perceived, he by little and little descended the Tree, and with the one hand clawed the Boar, and with the other held him about the Tree, and seeing the Boar slept very soundly, drawing out his knife, smote the Boar to the heart and killed

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killed him, and shortly after wedded the Emperors Daughter, and after the death of her Father, he was made Emperor. Then said she, My Lord, wot ye not what I have said? he said, Right well. Then said she, This mighty Boar betokeneth your most noble Person, against whom may no Man withstand, neither by wisdom nor strength. The Shepherd with his Staff, to the Person of your ungracious Son, who with his Staff of Cunning beginneth to play with you, as the Herdsman clawed the Boar, made him sleep, and after killed him. In the same manner the Masters of your Son, by those false Fables and Narrations claw you, and glose with you, until your Son slay you, that he may reign. Then said the Emperor, God forbid they should do to me as he did to the wild Boar; and he said unto her, This Day my Son shall die. And she answered, If you do so, then do ye wisely. Then the Emperor, the second time sitting in Judgment, commanded to lead him to the Place of Execution, appointed for that purpose. Whilst he was going, the second Master, said, O my Lord and Emperor, if you should slay your Son for the Words of your Wife, it shall happen worse to you than it did a certain Knight, which for the Words of his Wife was unjustly put upon the Pillory. The Emperor said, O good Master tell me how that happened. And he said, My Lord, I shall not say it, unless you will call your only Son from the death, until the Example be told; which if it turn not you from your purpose, then your Will be fulfilled. Then the Emperor commanded the

Child

Child should be called again : And after this manner following, the second Master began to tell.

The Example of the second Master.

In a City was an ancient Knight, which wedded a young Wife, and fair, as you have done, whom he loved above all earthly things. The Knight was a very circumspect and careful Husband, in-
somuch that every Night he locked the Door with his own hands, and laid the Keys under his Bed's-head. In that City was a Law or Custom, That a certain Hour in the Night a Bell was used to be rung, that after the ringing of the said Bell, if any Man or Woman were by the Watchmen found about the Streets, all that Night they should be kept in Prison, and on the Morrow set upon the Pillory, that all People might behold them.

The said Knight had little lust of fleshly deed, to perform the desires and appetite of his young Wife : Wherefore every Night she having a Paramour, her Husband sleeping, took the Keys from under his Bed's-head, and went to her Lobe ; and when she came again, laid the Keys under her Husband's head. And thus they played many a time.

It happened upon a Night, that the Knight awaked from his sleep, and missed his Wife, and the Keys from his Bed's-head ; whereupon he rose up, and went unto the Doors, and found them open, the which he bolted fast within, and went up again into his Chamber, and looked out of the Window towards the Street ; and when it was near the third Cock's Crow, his Wife came from her best beloved, and found the Door shut and bolted within.
Then

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Then was she sorrowful; nevertheless knocked to
have come in. Then spake the Knight out of the
Window: O thou most wicked and unclean Wife!
now I know that many times thou hast forsaken
my Bed, and gone and done Adultery; now thou
shalt stand until the Bell be rung, that the Watch-
men may take thee, and do with thee according to
the Law. His Wife answer'd, My Lord, Why do
you lay that to me? For in very truth, the cause
of my being abroad was for no ill; but I was by
my Mother's Maid fetched in the Night; and when
I saw you sleep so sweetly, I durst not awake you,
because you are old, and therefore I took the Keys,
and went to my Mother, who is sore sick, that I
fear to morrow she must be anointed or annihila-
ted: Notwithstanding, because I would not you
offend, I have hasted again unto you, and have left
her lying in great pain; therefore I pray you, for
the love of God, let me in before the Bell ringeth.
The Knight answered, You shall not come in, you
must abide here until the Bell ringeth, and un-
til the Watchmen come and take you. Then said
she, That would be to you, and to me, and unto
all our friends and kindred a great shame; there-
fore, for the reverence of Almighty God, let me in.
Then said he, Have in thy mind, Foul and false
Wife, how oftentimes thou hast forsaken my Bed,
and done Adultery: It is much better thou suffer
shame, and bewail for thy sins here in the World,
than to suffer pain in Hell. She said again to
him, I pray you for the love of him that was cru-
cify'd and died on the Cross, have mercy on me.
The

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The Knight said, Thou labourst in vain, for thou shalt carry the coming of the March-men. She hearing that, said, My Lord, ye know by this Word standeth a Well, if you let me not come in, I shall here drown my self, rather than all my friends should be ashamed for me. Then said he, Would to God thou hadst been drowned long before, thou camest in my Bed. As they thus spake, the Moon went down, and all was very dark. Then she, said she, it will be no other wise, I shall drown my self; but yet before, like a true Christian Woman, I shall make my Testaments: First, I bequeath to God my Soul, and my body to be buried in the Church of St. Peter: All other things and goods that God hath sent me, I give you, to dispose for my



Soul, after your pleasure. And when she had thus said, she went unto the Well, and there lying a great stone, with both her Arms she lift up and said,
 Now

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Now I drowne my self ; and so cast the stone down into the Well, and went again privily and stood by the Door. The Knight hearing the noise, cryed with a very loud voice, Alas ! alas ! my sweet Wife is drowned ! And hastily came down, and ran to the Well. And when she saw the Door open, presently she entred, and locked the Door, and went up into the Chamber, and lay and looked out of the Window. The Knight stood by the Well, and wept bitterly, and said, Woe to me ! I have now lost my best beloved Wife ! Cursed be the time that I made fast this Door against her ! When the Lady heard that, she said, O thou cursed and old Gypcard ! Why standest thou here at this time of the Night ? Was not my Body sufficient ? Wherefore do you go thus every Night to your Harlots and leade my Bed ? As he heard the voice of his Wife, he was right glad and said, Blessed be God that yet she is not drowned : But my good Lady, wherefore do you lay such things against me ? I thought to have chastised you, and therefore I locked the Door, but in no wise I intended to pour perill upon you. I knew well what sorrow I made for you, when you fell into the Well, and therefore I was looking to have helped you. Whereupon she answered him, I never committed such fault unto thee as thou sayest to me : But it appeareth by a common saying, He that is guilty or culpable himself of a sin, judgeth every Man to be in the same ; or else, The Father never sought the Son in the Oven, except he had been therein himself. In like case conceivest thou a false surmise of me : But one thing I promise thee, thou

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thou shalt abide there till the Watch-men come, and the Bell be rung; that they may lead thee before the Judges, to abide and suffer the Law. Then said the Knight, Wherefore lay you such things to me that am old, impotent, and unfit to delight in such a Game? I have dwelt long in this City, and never was defamed; therefore let me in, that to me or your self you do no shame. She said, Ye say in vain; it is better you forthink your Sins in this World, than in Hell. Have in mind what the Wise Man saith, A poor Man Proud, a rich Man a Lyar, and an old Man a Fool, God hateth: so be you a Fool and Rich. What need you to slander me? Cannot you be content when ye have the flower of my Youth at your pleasure, but you must run to Harlots? And therefore it is the great grace of God that you have time to forthink it, lest ye should be damned for more Sins; therefore suffer some penance patiently. The Knight said, O my best beloved Lady, although it be so, God is merciful, and asketh nothing of a Sinner, but that he amend his Life, and do penance for his Sins: Now let me in, and I will make amends. She said, What Devil made you so good a Preacher, but yet you come not in. As they thus spake, the Bell rung: then he intreated very fervently, saying, Now suffer me to come in, that I be not ashamed for ever. She answered, the ringing of the Bell doth portend the health of your Soul. And as this was said, presently came the Watch-men about the City, and found the Knight standing in the Street, and said to him, O good Man, it is not good that

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ye stand here in this hour of the Night. As she heard this voice of the Watch-men, she said, Good fellows: avenge me on that old accursed Whore-hunter; for ye know whose Daughter I am: This accursed old Man is wont every Night to leave my Bed, and go to his Whores; I have long forbore him, and would not complain on him to my friends, but I trusted that he would have amended this misrule, but it helpeth not: Therefore punish him after the Law, that all such old Dotards may take Example by him. Then the Watch-men took him, and all Night chastised him in Prison, and on the Morrow put him on the Pillory. Now, said the Master to the Emperor, Lord, have ye understood what I have said? And he said, Right well. Then said the Master, If you put to Death your Son by the instigation of your Wife, it shall chance worse unto you than to the Knight.

The Emperor said, She was the worst Woman that ever I heard of, that so falsely brought her Husband to shame and rebuke: I say Master, for this Example my Son shall not dye this Day. The Master said unto him, If you do so, you do wisely, and hereafter you shall joy. So I commit you to God, and thank you for your patient hearing, and sparing of your Son; and so he departed.

The Third Complaint of the Empress, more full of Cunning and Sorrow than the former.

When the Empress heard the Child was not dead, she wept bitterly, and entered her Privy Chamber, and tore her Skin with her Nails, and

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and with a loud Voice cryed: Alas, that euer I was born, that so great a King's Daughter should be thus intreated and shamed, and can haue no remedy! Her Gentlewoman hearing this, went, and shewed it to the Emperour, and he went unto her, and comforted her, saying, O Lady, weep not so, for it becometh you not. Who answered, The Love that I owe unto you, maketh me more sorrow than the contempt of Death: For why, the inward Love of your Heart hath hitherto prohibited me, that I have not returned into my Country to my Father: But I fear, should I do so, it might turn to your harm; for he is mighty to Honour me with Riches, and to revenge my Quarrel in such wise as you might repent it. Whereunto said the Emperour, Let that pass out of your Mind, nor repent it any more; for as long as I live I shall never fail you. And she said, Lord, I pray God you may long live: but I fear it may happen to you, as it befel to a Knight and his Son, that would not bury his Father's Head in the Church-Yard, yet his Father died for him. Then said the Emperour, shew me the Example, that he would not bury his Father's Head. She said, I shall do it for your profit.

The Third Example of the Empress.

In the City of Rome there was a Knight which had two Daughters and one Son; this Knight had such a delight in Hunting, Juggling, and Tourney, that all things he might win and get in, he

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spent thereupon. In that time lived an Emperour named Octavian, which in Riches of Gold and Silver exceeded other Kings and Princes, insomuch that he had a Tower full of Gold, and ordained a Knight to have the keeping and charge thereof. This Knight by Hunting, Jousting, and other idle Games, came to such great Poverty, that he was forced, out of the extremity of his adverse Fortunes, to sell his Heritage, and called unto him his Son, and said, My Son it behoveth me of your counsel, for necessity compelleth me to sell my He-



ritage, or else to find some other way whereby I may live; for if I should sell mine Heritage, you and your Sisters would perish. Then the Son said, Father, if you can find any manner of Means, without selling your Heritage, I should be ready to help you. The Father said, I have thought on a good counsel. The Emperour hath a great Tower full

full of Gold ; by night time, let us with Instruments dig and hew through the Tower, and let us take of the Gold as much as shall suffice. Whereunto the Son answered, That counsel cannot be amended : for it is better of the Emperors Gold to take (to help us) than to sell our Heritag.

So they arose in the Night, and went to the Tower, and with Instruments made a hole through the Wall, and took as much Gold as they could both carry away at that time, and the King paid his Debts, and haunted again Jests as he did before, until all was consumed. In the mean while the Keeper of the Treasure went into the Tower ; and when he saw the Treasure stoln, and a great Hole made through the Wall, he began to wax sore afraid, and went unto the Emperour and shewed what had befall. To whom the Emperour said, all angry, What needs thou to shew me that? Have I not delivered to thee my Treasure? Therefore of thee I will ask it. Anon, as the Keeper heard that, he went to the Tower again ; and set before the Hole a great Cessel full of Pitch melted, with other Wines of subtilty, that no Man might come in at the Hole, but he must needs fall into that Cessel ; and if he had therein fell, he could no more come out of it. Not long after, the Knight had all the Gold consumed and spent, and went again with his Son to steal more Gold : and as the Father went in first, anon he was fallen into the Cessel full of Pitch to the Neck : and when he saw he was taken, and could not get out, he said to his Son, Follow me not ; for if thou dost, thou canst not escape

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by any man. Then said the Son, God defend that I should not help you, for if you are found, we are all did; and if you may not be holpen by me, I shall seek counsel how you may be delivered. The Father said, There is no other counsel but with thy Sword smite off my Head, and as my Body is found without an Head, no Man shall know me: and if thou and my Daughters may escape this worldly shame and death. The Son said, Father, ye have given the best counsel: For if it were so that any Man might perceive any knowledge of you, none of us all shall escape Death; and it is expedient that your Head be smitten off. Anon he drew out his Sword, and smote off his Father's Head, and cast it into a Pit, and then went and shewed unto his Sisters all the matter; who many days after privately bewailed the death of their Father. After this, the Keeper of the Treasury came into the Tower, and found a Body without a Head; whereat he wondered sore, and shewed it unto the Emperour: to whom he said, Bind the Body to the Tail of an Horse, and so draw him through all the Streets of the City, and diligently take good heed if ye hear any cry or weeping, wheresoever you do hear that, he was Lord of the House; take all them and the Body, and draw them to the Gallows and hang them. The which the Emperour's Servants fulfilled according to his Commandment. And as they came against the House of the dead Knight, the Daughters seeing the Body of their dead Father, made a marvellous great shriek, and wept piteously. And as their

Bro.

Brother heard that, he wounded himself with a
 Knife, so that great plenty of Blood came out of
 his Wound. The Officers when they heard the
 cry, entered the House, and demanded the cause of
 their clamour. Then answered the Son, They
 lament because I am thus wounded; for when my
 Sisters saw the Blood so abundantly go out, as you
 see, they began to weep and cry: and when the Of-
 ficers saw the Wound, they believed his Words,
 and so went and hanged the Knight's Body upon
 the Gallows, where he hung a long time, and his
 Son would neither take his Body down from the
 Gallows, nor yet bury his Head. The Empress
 said, Understand ye what I have said? The Em-
 peror said, Right well.

The Declaration of the Example.

Then spake the Empress thus, My Lord I fear
 it will so chance to you and to your Son: the
 Knight for the Love of his Son was made poor,
 and first he committed Theft and brake the Tow-
 er: Secondly, caused himself to be beheaded, that
 his Children should have no shame. After the Son
 cast his Head into a Dike and buried it not, neither
 in the Church nor in the Church-Yard, and his
 Body he suffered to hang still on the Gallows; if
 he could not have taken it down in the Day, he
 might well have done it in the Night. In this
 manner ye labour Night and Day, that ye may pro-
 mote your Son to Honour and Riches, but with-
 out doubt he labourerth for your Destruction, that he
 may Reign after you in your Empire. Therefore

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I addeſſe you ſpeedily to take away his Life, who-
liſing, would ſuddenly prove the deſtruction of
yours. The Emperour ſaid, You have rewarded me
a good Example. The Knight's Son, when he had
ſmitten off his Father's head, would not bury it :
without doubt my Son ſhall not do ſo to me. Then
anon he commanded his Officers that they ſhould
lead him to the Gallows, and they all obeyed his
commandment haſtily. As they led him through
the ſtreets, the People made a great noiſe and
lamentation, crying, Alas ! alas ! the only Son of
the Emperour is led again toward the Gallows :
And as they led him, the third Maſter named Cra-
ton, came riding upon an Horſe, and as the Child
ſaw him, he bowed down his head to him, and as
though he had ſaid, Have mind upon me. The
People cried, ſaying, O, good Maſter, make haſt
and ſave your Diſciple. So he ſmote his Horſe
with his ſpurs, and haſted to the Palace. And
when he came before the Emperour, he honourably
ſaluted him ; who ſaid, Thy coming hither ſhall
nothing avail thee, for I think it long until I be
avenged on thee. The Maſter replied, I hoped at
my coming to have been welcomie, and to have had
a better reward, and not ſo to be rebuked. The Em-
perour ſaid, As ye have deſerved, ſo ſhall it be to you.
To whom he ſaid, My Lord, What have I deſer-
ved ? The Emperour ſaid, Ye right well deſerve
death ; for I delibered your my Son well ſpeaking,
and well manner'd, to be informed and taught, and
ye have delivered him again unto me dumb, and a
Ribauld. To which the Maſter answered, In that
you

you say he is dumb, that I commit to God: For he maketh the dumb to speak, and the deaf to hear: But in that you say he would have enforced your Wife, that should I gladly know, if any creature hath seen that: For there is no Malice above the Malice of a Woman, and that I shall prove by a good Example, that a Woman is full of falshood and unknown deceit: And if you put to death your Son for the words of your Wife, it shall happen unto you as it did to a Nobleman and his Wife, and his Wyfe, which he loved marvellously. To whom the Emperour said, I pray you tell me how that Women are full of malice and leadings: who said, I shall not shew it; but if you will first call again your Son from death, then at your pleasure I shall shew the Example. Then the Emperour made his Son to be called again, and put in Prison; and the Master began to tell the Example in manner following.

The Example of the Third Master.

There was in a City a rich Burgeiss that had a Wyfe, which he loved so well, that every day he taught her to speak Latin and Hebrew; and when he had leached her perfectly to speak these two Languages, all that she saw and heard, she shewed and told her Master.

This young Man had a fair young Wife, as ye have, the which he loved full well; but she on the contrary loved him not, because he was not of that lascivious performance, to answer her Lusts according to her desires: Therefore she had another young Man, that she loved above her Husband:

and

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and always as her Husband was out of Town about his Merchandize and other Business, she sent for her best beloved, that they might make good Cheer together. The Pye, as she espyed that, told it to her Master at his coming home, in such a man-



ner, as the noise ran all over the City of her Adultery: wherefore her Husband many times brawled and chid with her. She answered him, We believe your cursed Pye, which as long as she liveth will always make betwixt us variance and discord. And he said, The Pye cannot lye, for what she seeth and heareth, that she telleth me, and therefore I believe her more than you. It fortuned that this Man went into a far Country about his Merchandize, and as soon as he was gone, his Wife sent for her Friend and Love, to Solace and make good Cheer with him: But he durst not come by Day-light, but abode until the Evening, lest

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lest he should be seen of the People: and when the Night was come, he knocked at the Gate, and she was ready and opened it. He said, I fear that the curled Wyre shall accuse me; for by her is come great slander upon us through all the City. Enter in, she said, boldly and fear not. As they should pass through the Hall where the Wyre was in her Cage, she heard him say these Words, O my most beloved! I fear me greatly, lest that the Wyre should betray us: and as the Wife heard that, she said, Be still fool, it is dark, she may not see you. Then the Wyre hearing that, said, If I see thee not, I hear thy Voice, and thou doest wrong to my Master, for thou sleepest with my Mistress; and when my Master cometh, I shall tell him. The good Man hearing that, said, Told I not you that the Wyre would discover us. And the Wife said, Fear not, for this Night we will be avenged on the Wyre, and so they entered into the Chamber, and slept together that Night. About midnight the Wife arose, and called her Maid, and said, Fetch me a Ladder, and set it up to the roof of the House, that I may avenge me on the Wyre. The Maid did so, and they went both up, and made a hole through the covering of the House right over the Wyre, and there thorough cast Sand, Clay, Stones, and Water upon the Wyre, insomuch that the poor Wyre was almost dead. And on the Morrow the young Man went out early at the back Door. When the good Man was come home, as his custom was, he went and visited the Wyre, and said to her, O Wyre, my beloved Bird, tell me how thou hast fared the

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the while I have been out. She said, Master, I will tell you tydings that I have heard: Your Wife, as soon as you were gone, by the night-time she let a Man come in; and as soon as I heard that, I told him that I should shew it you at your coming home; yet she led him into her Chamber, and kept with him all Night: You ask me also how I have done in your absence? and I say to you, of a truth, that I was never so nigh my death, as I was that same Night, with snow, hail, and rain, that fell upon me so long together, that I was almost left for dead. The Wife when she heard that, said to her Husband, Sir, you believe your Wye, now you may hear what she sayeth, she complaineth, That in the same night there fell so much snow, hail, and rain, upon her, that she was almost dead; and yet there was none of them that same Night; for there was not in the Year a clearer and fairer Night than it was; and therefore from henceforth believe her not. Then went the good Man to his Neighbours, and asked of them, if in that Night were any tempest, or rain? They answered, That some of them walked all Night, and in all that Year there was not seen a fairer Night. Then went he to his House, and said to his Wife, I have found you in a truth; for the Night was very fair and clear, as I understand of your Neighbours. You may now know of a truth, said she, that the Wye is a lyar; with her leadings she hath sown much discord betwixt us. Moreover, I am defamed through the City by her false leadings. Then the Burgeis went unto the Wye, and said, Where-

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foze hast thou made lyes betwixt me and my Wife? Is this the thanks I have for the Meat that I was wont to give thee with mine own hands every Day? And thou hast thereby brought my Wife into great Disgrace through all the City. The Pye answered, God knoweth that I cannot lye; for that which I saw and have heard I shewed you. Then said he, Thou lyest; thou hast said unto me, that in the same night was hail, snow, and rain, that thou hadst near hand lost thy life, which is false, and therefore from henceforth thou shalt make no more leasings, nor discord betwixt me and my Wife; and so took the Pye and brake her Neck.

When as the Wife saw that, she was glad, and said, Now thou hast done well; now may we all our days live in rest and peace. And when he had slain the Pye, he look'd up and saw in the top of his House, a Ladder, and a Urnel with water, sand, and stones: And when he beheld that, he perceived the falshood of his Wife, and cried with a loud voice, Woe to me! that for my Wife's Words I have slain my Pye, and also my solace and joy is lost, the which in all things said to me truth! And as he had thus done, anon for sorrow he left his Merchandise, and all his House, and went towards the Holy Land, and never returned home again unto his Wife. Then the Master said unto the Emperor, Sir, have you understood what I have said? he answered, Right well. The Master said, Was not this a cursed Wife, that so by her falshood, deceit and cunning, caused the Pye to be slain? The Emperor said, In troth she

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she was full of fallenesse: it pitieth me greatly to think upon the Wyfe, which for her true saying lost her Life. Verily I say unto you, that you have told me a very fair Example, therefore this Day my Son shall not die. Then said the Master, Sir, you do wisely; and I thank you that you have spared your Son this Day for my sake, and so to God I commend you.

The Fourth Complaint of the Empress.

When the Empress heard that the Child was not dead, she made great noise, and crying in such wise, that she was heard thorough the Palace, and said, Woe unto me that ever I was made Empress! Would to God I had died when I was first brought into these Parts! When the Emperor heard that cry that she made, he entered into the Chamber, and comforted her as much as he could, and demanded the cause of her Lamentation. Who said, O! mine own Lord, have you no wonder, though that I be in this Sorrow and Agony? for I am your Wife and in your Company, by your Son I am ashamed: ye saw lately the bloody Marks of his enforcement upon my tender Flesh; and you have promised me, that he therefore should be hanged, and yet he liveth; wherefore should I not be sorry? The Emperor answered, Be content, and I shall do Justice upon my Son to Morrow: I forbore him Yesterday, at the moving of one of his Masters by an Example. Then said she, Have you forbid to do Justice for one Word? were it so, yet for a Word ye should not lett to do Justice: and ye say, for the Example of one Master ye have lett it. I fear

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I fear me it shall happen to you and your Masters, as on a time it fortuned unto an Emperour with his Seven Wise Masters. The Emperour said, I pray you tell me that Example. She said, To what intent should I labour in Vain? For Yesterday I shewed you a good Example, and it availed not: and what soever I shewed you for Honour and Profit, that the Masters of your Son turn to your Destruction: As in the present Example I shall clearly shew unto you. To whom the Emperour said, O, my best beloved Lady, shew me that Example, by the same I may beware, for though in my clemency I gave him one Days benefit of Life to my Son, I shall not therefore give him his Life; for what's deferred is not forgotten. She said, Gladly shall I shew it to your Profit: And began to tell as followeth:

The Fourth Example of the Empress.

Sometimes there was in the City of Rome, Seven Wise Masters, by whom the Empire was Governed: and the Emperour, that then was, did never tempt any thing without the Counsel of his Masters: Whereupon they perceiving that the Emperour was so affected to them, that without them he would not ordain, or do any thing, debiled by their Arts and cunning, that the Emperour should clearly see as long as he was in the Palace, but so soon as he was out, he should become blind; and so did they, that they might the more freely have the dealing themselves of all things that appertained to the Emperour; by which they won great Profit
 and

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and Lucre of Goods: and after they had wrought the Experiment, they could never change it, nor undo it afterwards; but the Emperour abode still blind many Years. And the Seven Masters made and proclaimed throughout the Empire, That if any Man had dreamed a Dream, he should come unto them with a Florent of Gold or Silver, and they will expound the Interpretation of his Dream: whereby, and by other unjust Means, they obtained much more substance and Money of the People than the Emperour did. So upon a time, when he sat at the Table with his Emperors, he began to sigh and sorrow in himself, and when he perceived that, he inquired diligently of him the cause. The Emperour said, Should it not be heavy and sorrowful unto me, that I so long have been blind, and cannot see out of my Palace, and yet find no Remedy? To whom spake the Emperors, and said, Lord, hear my Counsel, and it shall never repent you, if you did thereafter. In your Court you have Seven Wise Masters, by whom ye and all the Empire are governed; if you mark, ye shall find they are the cause of your Blindness; and if it be so, they are worthy to die a most shameful Death: Therefore hearken my Advice: First send for them, and shew to them your Infirmitie, and threaten them on their Lives, that they should find some speedy Remedy to help you of your Sicknes and Blindness. This Counsel pleased the Emperour well. And anon he sent for the Masters, and when they were come, the Emperour shewed unto them his Infirmitie and Blindness, and charged them on pain of Death, that they

they should presently seek some Remedy to ease him thereof. Then answered they, We desire of us a thing that is difficult to be done thus shortly, but give us respite for two Days, and we will give you your full Answer. The Emperor was therewithal well contented. Then the Seven Wise Masters went unto Counsel how they might restore him to his Sight again, and in no wise could they find the Means how to put away the Blindness from the Emperor: Wherefore they were all right sorrowful, and said among themselves, Without we find Remedy, we are all but dead Men. So they throughout all the Empire sought if they could find any Remedy, or Counsel therefore. It happened upon a time going through the City, in the midst thereof they found Children playing, and after them came a Man with a Talent or Florent of Gold, and said to them, Good Masters, this Night have I dreamed a Dream, the Interpretation whereof I would fain know, wherefore I pray you shew me what it signifieth, and take the Gold to you. That heard one of the Children, (that played amongst the others) who said unto him, Give me the Gold, and I will expound you the Dream. The Man said, I dreamed this Night, that in the midst of mine Orchard was a great Spring of Water, whereof came many small Springs, that all my Orchard was full, and overflown with Water. The Child said, Take a Spade, and dig in the same place where you thought that the Water sprung out, and there shall you find a hoard of Gold, so great, that you and your Children, and

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Lineage shall be for ever Rich. The Man did as the Child had shewed to him, and found the Treasure. Then went the Man to the Child, and mended him a Pound weight of the Gold that he had found, for the Interpretation of the Dream; but he would receive none, but committed him to the Prayers of the Man. The Seven Wise Masters when they heard the Child had so wisely expounded the Dream, they said to him, Good Child, what is your name? He answered, I am called Merlin. Then said the Masters, We see surely great Wisdom in you; we shall shew you a great Matter, of which we would gladly find a Remedy. The Child said, Shew me your Matter. And they said, The Emperor of Rome, as long as he is in the Palace, hath his sight very clear without any impediment; but as soon as he is gone out of the Palace, he cannot see. Now if you can find the cause thereof and give present Remedy, whereby he may be eased and have his Sight, ye shall have a great Reward and Honour of the Emperor. Then answered the Child, I know as well the cause of his Blindness, as the Remedy. Then said all unto him, Come with us unto the Emperor, and you shall be rewarded so largely, that ye shall be pleased. To whom the Child said, I am ready to go with you. And when they came with the Child before the Emperor, they said unto him, Lord, lo here is the Child we have brought which shall fulfil your Desire, touching the cause of your Blindness, and the recovery of your Sight. The Emperor said, Good Masters will you take it upon you

you, that the Child will perform it? They all said, Yea, for we are expert in his Wisdom. The Emperour turned himself towards the Child, and said, Will you undertake to tell me the cause of my Blindness, and the Remedy? The Child answered, My Lord the Emperour, lead me into your Bed-chamber, and there I will shew you what is to be done; and as he was therein brought, he said to his Servants, take the Cloaths from off the Bed, and all the Apparrell, and you shall see Wonders: That done, they saw a Well smoking that had Seven Springs and Heads, which when the Emperour saw, he marvelled greatly: The Child said, We see this Well, without it be quenched, ye shall never have your Sight. The Emperour said, How may that be? The Child said, But one way. The Emperour said, Shew us the Means, and if it be possible it shall be done, that I may recover my Sight as well without as within. To whom the Child said, My Lord, the Seven Springs of this Well are the Seven Wise Masters, who hitherto have traiterously governed you and your Empire, and have made you blind as ye be without your Palace, that they your Subjects by Extortion might pill and pole, you not seeing it. But they know not the Remedy; therefore hear now my Counsel, and this Well shall be quenched and extinct: Strike off the first Master's Head, and anon you shall see the first Spring quenched, and so by order one after another, till they are all beheaded, and anon all the Springs with the Well shall be quenched, and ye shall have your Sight, as ye had before; and when this was

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done, the Well with the Seven Springs was banished. And as the Emperour had his Sight again, he made the Child a great Lord, and gave him great abundance of Goods. Then spake the Empress, My Lord, have you well perceived this Example that I have told you? And he said, Yea, in



the best wise, and ye have visited a worthy and good Example. Then said she, in the same manner your Seven Wise Masters intend to do with you, with their false Narrations, that your Son may reign over your Empire, which God forbid.

The Declaration of the Example.

This Well is your Son, whereout floweth Seven Springs, that signifieth the Seven Wise Masters, which Son you may not destroy without the Seven Wise Masters be brought to nought: that done, this Well, that is your Son, with all his Wiles, shall not escape, but let him taste of Death, (which

bests

hefts his shamefull defects, lest he have a helpe of
 his Masters) and after consequently the Seven
 Masters, and so you shall govern and guide your
 Empire in peace and rest. The Emperour anon
 commanded his Servants to lead his Son to the
 Gallows, which they were loath to do. Then a
 great multitude of people gathered with great noise
 and bewailing; so that the fourth Master, named
 Malquidrake, heard thereof, who leapt upon his
 Horse, and hasted to the Palace, where he met with
 his Disciple, and commended him unto him; and
 when he came before the Emperour, and did his De-
 beyance, the Emperour said, Little thanks shall you
 have, you old curled Castif! for so ill teaching my
 Son. I belivered you my Son well speaking, and
 in all things right vertuous; but you have sent
 him home a Fool, Dumb, and a Ribauld, for he
 would have lain with my Wife by force; and there-
 fore all ye forthwith shall be hang'd. Then said the
 Master, My Lord, I have not deserved so ill of
 you; God knoweth why your Son speaketh not;
 in short time you shall perceive other things but the
 time is not yet come: You say he would have op-
 pressed your Wife; that is not truth nor proved;
 for neither for one single person should you judge
 your Son to be such. If for the Words of your
 Wife you judge your Son to die, it shall be worse
 to you than to a certain Old Man and his Wife,
 and that I shall well prove. To whom the Em-
 perour said, I think you do with me, as sometimes
 Seven Wise Men did to an Emperour. Whereupon
 said the Master, the Sentence of one, nor of twenty,

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ty, may not sound to the rebuke of all other : But one thing of a truth I shall shew you, that even shall come to you, if ye this Day put your Son to Death for the Words of your Wife, of which I could shew a notable Example. Then said the Emperour, Recite it. The Master said, If you will call your Son from Death, then will I rehearse the Example, or else not. The Emperour commanded he should be called again, and desired the Master to say as hereafter followeth.

The Example of the Fourth Master.

There was an old Knight, and a right Wise Man that liued long without Wife or Child : His Friends oftentimes exhorted him to take a Wife.

The Knight thus counselled by his Friends, at last agreed unto them, and they gave him to Wife the Daughter of the Probost of Rome, that was rich, and comely of feature ; whom when he saw, he began to love marvellously well ; and when he had been married a certain space and had no Child, in the Morning it happened that she went to the Church, where she met with her Mother, who said, My Daughter, how pleaseth you your Marriage and your Husband ? She said, Right vile, for you have given me an old Lame Man, to my discontentment in all Respects, and I would you had the same time buried me ; for I had rather lie and eat with the Swine, than with him, therefore I may no longer thus endure, but I must needs love another. Then said the Mother ; God forbid,
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my dear Daughter : How long have I been with your Father, and yet never medled with such foolishness ? The Daughter said, It is no marvel, for you both met in your Youth together, and the one took solace of the other ; but I can of him receive no manner of corporal pleasure ; for he is cold, and on the Bed he lieth as still as a stone, or as a thing immovable. The Mother answered, If you love another, tell me what he is. The Daughter said, I will love a Priest. To whom the Mother said, It were better and less sin for you to love a Knight or Squire. She said, In short time he would be weary of me, and after do me Shame, and so will not the Priest ; for he will keep his own honour and counsel, as well as mine : And spiritual Men be more true to their Lovers than secular Men be. The Mother said, Hear my counsel, it will be for your good : Old folks are wilely and fell ; tempt your Husband first, and if you escape him without doing you harm or smiting, then love the Priest. The Daughter said, I may not so long abide. The Mother said, Upon my Blessing abide till you have proved. The Daughter said, Upon your Blessing I will abide till I have attempted : But first tell me how I shall prove him. The Mother said, He hath in his Orchard a Tree which he loveth much, cause it to be smitten down while he is a hunting, and against his coming home, make him a fire therewith ; and if he forgive you, then love the Priest. As she heard the counsel of her Mother, she went home. To whom her Husband said, Where have you been so long ? She answered,

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answered, I have been at the Church, where I met with my Mother, and with her I have had a little talk : And so began properly to dissemble. After mid-day the Knight rode forth to hunt ; then she thinking upon the counsel of her Mother, went to the Gardiner, and said, Cut down this young Tree newly planted, that I may make a fire thereof to warm my Lord withal, at his coming from Hunting, for it is a great Wind, sharp, and cold. The Gardiner said, Madam, that I will not do,



for my Lord loveth this Tree better than he doth all the other Trees ; nevertheless I shall gather Wood enough to make a good fire ; but in any case this I will not hew down. As she heard that, then boldly she took the Ax from the Gardiner, and hewed down the Tree her self, and made the Gardiner, with others, to bear it home. At evening, when her Lord came from Hunting, he was very cold,

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and she made a great fire, and went to meet him, and set him a stool before the fire to warm him; and as he a little while had sitten, he perceived the odour of the fire, and called the Gardiner, and said, I smell by this odour that the new Plant butteth in the Fire. The Gardiner said, Lord, it is true; my Lady, your Wife, hath felled it down. The Knight said unto her, God forbid that my Plant should be cut down by you. She answered anon, Lord I have done it, knowing the weather and you also cold, and therefore I have ordained this fire for your comfort. And as the Knight heard that, he looked angry upon her, and said, Cursed Woman! how was thou so obdurate relentless, and void of pity, as to hew down so gentle a young Tree, the which thou knowest it well, that I loved it above all my other Trees? When he had so said, she began to weep and excuse her self, and said, My Lord, I have done it for your good, and do you take it grievously? and began to cry, Woe! woe be to me! Anon as the Knight saw the weeping of his Wife, and heard the cause, he was moved with pity, and said unto her, Cease your weeping, and beware how you anger me any more, or trouble me in any thing I love. The next Day, early in the morning, she went again to the Churchyard, and met with her Mother coming home, and they saluted each other. Then the Daughter said unto the Mother, O dear Mother, I will love the Priest; for I have attempted my Lord, as you counselled me, but all for nought; for anon he forgave it, when he saw me a little weep. Then said the Mother,

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Mother, though old Men for one time forgive, they double the pain another time, and therefore I counsel you, That you yet once again tempt him. Then said the Daughter, I may no longer abide; for I suffer so much pain for the love of the Priest, that with my tongue I cannot tell it; therefore you shall pardon me, I will no more follow your counsel. Then said the Mother, For the love that the Child should have unto the Mother, attempt him yet once more for your Father's blessing; then if you go quietly, without harm or beating, love the Priest in the name of God. Then answered the Daughter, It is to me great pain so long to abide; nevertheless, for the Blessing of my Father, I will once more attempt him: But tell me how I shall begin. The Mother said, I understand that he hath a little Hound that he loveth well, and keepeth on his Bed, cast the Hound with great might before his Face against the Wall that it die; and if you escape without a stripe, or he forgive it lightly, then in the name of God love the Priest. The Daughter said, I will in all things do after your counsel; for there is no Daughter living at this day that would more gladly have the Blessings of Father and Mother than I: And so she had her Mother farewell, and went home again, and that Day with great trouble of heart she brought to the Night; and when the Night was come, she commanded the Bed to be covered with Purple and Cloth of Gold, whilst the Knight sat by the Fire; and when the Bed was made ready, the little Hound, as he was accustomed, leaped upon the

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the Bed, and she took him by the hinder legs, and with a malicious heart she cast him against the Wall, that it lay still dead. When the good old Knight saw that, he was marvellously angry, and said with a loud Voice to his Wife, O thou most cruel and spiteful of all wicked Women! how couldest thou find in thine heart to kill that gentle hound that I loved so much? Lord! said she, have you not seen how with his fat (coming out of the mire) he bewrayed our Bed, that is so precious covered with rich Cloaths! And the Knight said, with much anger. Know you not that I loved much better my little Hound than the Bed? When she heard that, she began pitcously to weep, and said, Alas be to me! that ever I was born! For all things that I do for the best, are turned to the worst. The Knight, out of the treasure of his pity, would not suffer the weeping of his Wife, but for that he loved her so well said unto her, Cease your weeping, for I forgive it you altogether; and I counsel you, beware how you displease me from henceforth: And so they went to Bed together.

Upon the Morrow very early, she went to the Church, where she met with her Mother, to whom, when she had done Reverence, as it behoved her, she said, Mother, now will I love the Priest, for I have attempted my Husband the second time, and all things he hath suffered. The Mother said, O my dear Daughter, there's no cruelty or falshood above the cruelty of old folks, and therefore once more probe him. To whom the Daughter answered, Mother, you labour in vain; for if you

will

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wist what and how much pain I suffered for the Priest's Love, you should help me if you love me. The Mother said, Hear me Daughter this time, and I shall never lett you more: Think how you have sucked Milk out of my Breast, and the great pain I suffered at your Birth; by these pains, my dear Daughter, I charge you deny not this good Petition, and I promise you no more to lett you, nor hinder you of your content, but rather to help you. Then answered the Daughter, It is to my great pain to abstain so long from the love of the Priest; nevertheless, for the great Charge you have laid to me, and for that you have made a Vow no more to lett me, but to further me, tell me how I might attempt him, and I shall once more adventure. The Mother said, I know on Sunday next he intendeth to have us all to Dinner, your Father, and I, and all your friends, with all the rest of the City; and when you are set in your place, and all the Meats are brought and served up on the Table, fasten your Keys privily, that hang at your Girdle, in the Table-cloth, and then feign to have forgotten your Knife, and say these Words openly: See what a short Wit I am of, I have forgotten my Knife in my Chamber! And then rise up hastily, and go, and the Cloth, with all the Meats, you shall overthrow upon the ground, and if you escape without pain, I make a Vow to God, I shall never lett you after. The Daughter said, That shall I gladly do; and so took her leave and departed. The Feast-day came, and all (as the Mother said) was bid: The Servants co-
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bered the Table, all were set, and the Daughter set over-against her Lord; and when the Table was well served with Meats, and other things belonging, the Lady of the House said with a loud voice: See how forgetful I am! I have left my Knife in my Chamber, which I must fetch. And so rose up hastily, and drew the Cloth with all the Meat upon it with her, and all the Gold Vessels and the Salts fell upon the ground. The Knight waxed sore angry in heart, but dissembling before the Guests, and commanded another Cloth and other Meats to be brought, and with joy saluted his Guests to eat and make good cheer, so that they were all merry. The Feast, or Dinner done, they all gave thanks to the Knight, and took their leaves every Man towards his own House. Upon the next Day in the morning, the Knight rose early, and went to the Church to hear Service; after which, he went to the Barber, and said unto him, Sir, Are you expert in blood-letting in what Vein I will desire you? And he said, Sir, I am expert in what Vein you can name in a Man's Body. The Knight said, I am content, come with me. And when he was come into the House, he entered his Chamber where his Wife lay in Bed, and said unto her, Rise up quickly. Then said she, What shall I do up so early? It is not nine of the clock. The Knight said, You must rise up, for you must be letten blood in both your Arms. She said, I was never letten blood, And shall I now bleed? Then said the Knight, That is truth, and therefore you are a Fool: Remember, First you hewed down
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my Trewe, another time you killed my little Hound, and but yester day you shamed me before all my Friends and Parents. If I should suffer you thus to go on, you would for ever shame me. The Cause hereof I consider: You have evil and wild blood within your body, and therefore I will that the corrupt blood be drawn out, that ye from henceforth shall put me no more to shame and anger. So he caused to be made a great fire; and she stood and cried, and held up her hands towards Heaven, and said, My Lord, forgive my trespass, and have pity on me at this time, and I will never more offend you. The Knight said, Pray for no Mercy; for the Mercy that God hath wrought towards thee at this present, is this, That except thou holdest thine Arm strait, I shall soon have thy heart's blood; and said to the Barber, Strike hard, and make a deep hole in her Arm, or I shall give you a great stripe. Then smote the Barber so sore, that the blood came abundantly out, and the Knight would not suffer him to stretch it, until the time that she changed her colour in her Visage; and as this was done, he had it to be stopped, and willed the Barber to smite the Vein upon the other Arm. Then she cried with a very loud voice, My sweet Husband, I pray have compassion on me, for now I die! The Knight answered, Wife, you should have thought on this before, /e'er you had done to me these three Despites. Then she held out her left Arm, and the Barber smote thereon a great hole, that the blood came out right ugly; and he suffered her to bleed till her Visage was changed,
and

and she swooned. Then said the Knight, I will unbind
her Arm, and stretch it; and said unto her, Now
go to Bed and study, and think henceforth to amend
your Life, or I shall draw the Blood of your Heart.
As this was done he gave the Barber his Reward,
and he went again to his own House, and his
Wife being under the Hands of her Maids, almost
dead, was led to her Bed: she made one of her Mai-
dens go to her Mother in haste, and say, That I
desire her to come and speak with me before I
die. The Mother when she heard that, was glad of
the correction of her Daughter, and came hastily
to her. When the Daughter heard her Mother,
she said, O, my sweet Mother, I am almost dead,
for I have bled so much, that I believe I shall not
escape Death. Then answered the Mother, Said
I not that old Men are right cruel; will ye now
love the Priest? She said, The Devil may the Priest
confound, I will never love other but my Husband.
Then said the Master to the Emperor, Lord, have
you understood me? He answered, Right well,
for amongst all I have heard, this was the best
Example. These evil Deeds she did to her Hus-
band; and I doubt not, if she had done the fourth,
she would have hanged him for ever. Then said
the Master, Therefore I counsel you that you beware
of your Wife, lest it happen worse to you, which
appears manifestly in this Example, if you put to
Death your only Son for her Words, you shall be de-
ceived in the end, and for ever shall repent it. The
Emperor said, Truly Master this day my Son shall
not die. The Master said, My Lord, I thank you.
that

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that you for my sake this Day have spared your only Son.

The Fifth Complaint of the Empress.

The Empress hearing the Child was not dead, forthwith Apparellled her self, and caused the Wains to be in readines, as though she would have gone into her own Country to her Father, to complain of the great Shame that was done her, and yet could have no Remedy. The Servants seeing that, shewed to the Emperour, that the Empress was going into her Country. When he perceived that, he went to her, saying, Whether are you going? I hoped you had loved me, so that in all the World you would have sought no Solace but with me. To which she said, That is true, and therefore I go from you; for I had rather hear of your Death than see you die. You delight so much to hear these Masters, that it shall happen to you as it did to Octavian the Emperour, the which was so covetous, that the Noblemen of the Empire buried him quick, and filled his Mouth full of molten Gold. The Emperour said, Dear Wife do not so, that the blame on you and me be not laid. Then said the Empress, Truly Sir, the blame is yours, for have you not promised me many times your Son shall die, yet he liveth? Therefore I will no more believe. Then said the Emperour, It becometh not a King every Cause lightly to discuss without great Advice, especially upon his Son; on whom it is not meet, but upon deliberation and good Counsel to pass Judgment: Therefore I pray you

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you tell me somewhat by which I may govern my Life, for it is the Destruction of a King, without Advice, undiscreeply to give Judgment. She answered, I will gladly tell you a notable Example, so that henceforth you will not be drowsy to hear the Masters, and began in this form following.

The fifth Example of the Emperors.

Octavianus the Emperour reigned in Rome, right Rich and Covetous, and above all things he loved Gold. The Citizens of Rome at that time did much harm, and many great Outrages to other Nations, insomuch that divers Regions were moved against the Romans. In that time was Master Virgilius, the which excelled in Magick and other Sciences all other Masters: The Citizens prayed him that by his Art he would devise, how they of their Enemies might have warning before-hand, whereby they might provide for themselves the better. And he made by his Cunning a Tower, and on the Tower did cause to be set as many Images as in all the World were Regions and Provinces, and in the midst of the Tower an Image, which held in his Hand an Apple, or a great round Ball of Gold, and every Image of the Tower held in his Hand a little Bell; and stood turning and looking towards his own Province to him assigned: And as often as any Province would rebel against the Romans, so often turned he to the Images of the Land, and rung the Bell; that hearing, the Citizens of Rome armed themselves, and so that Province hastened with

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all their might the same to subdue: so there was no Land so great that could weake them upon the Romans, and therefore were they feared over all the World. Also that Master Virgil made for the comfort of the poore People a Light that always burned; and by that Light he made two Baths, the one of them hot, in which the poore People might Bathe, and wash themselves; And the other cold, in which they might themselves refresh. Betwixt the Light and the Bathes, he made an Image, standing, in whose Fore head was written, He that smiteth me shall anon have Vengeance. The Image stood there many Years, and at last came a Clerk and beheld the Image, and read the Writing, and thought in himself, What Vengeance he might find: therefore I do believe better, if any Man smite thee, and thou fallest therewith to the Earth, he shall find some Treasure under thy Feet, and therefore is the Writing, that no Man should have it. And the Clerk lift up his hand and gave the Image a great Stroke that it fell to the Ground: And anon the Light was out, and the Baths were vanished away, and he found no Treasure. The poore Folks perceiving that, were all sorrowful, and laid their curses and Complaints upon him, that for his singular Covetousness had destroyed the Images, and robbed them of so great a Solace. Hereafter assembled three Kings, which by the Romans, had suffered great wrongs, and went to take Counsel how they might be avenged of the Romans, and some of them said, We labour in vain, for as long as there standeth the Tower with the Image

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Images, we cannot do any thing against them.

At the Counsellorose four Knights, and said, We have thought on a Remedy how to destroy the Tower with the Images, and that to do, we will lay our Lives to pledge, if you will be at the cost. Then answered the King, What cost shall we be at? They answered, Four Tun of Gold. Then said the King, Take the Gold, and fulfil your promise. The Knights took the Gold, and went towards Rome, and when they came thither in the Night without one of the Gates, in the Ditch full of Water, they drowned one of the Tuns with the Gold in it, and another Tun they drowned by the second Gate, and the third Tun they drowned by the third Gate, and the fourth Tun by the fourth Gate; and when they had thus done, early in the Morning they entered into the City at an Hour convenient, and as the Emperour went over to the Market they did him Reberence. The Emperour seeing them, demanded from whence they were? of what Science? and what Service they could do? They answered, We are all of far Countries, and Scuthlayers, so perfect, that there is never a thing so pssibly hid, but we shall find it out by our Dreams. We have heard that ye labour and have pleasure in such things, and therefore we came unto you to know if you have need of our Service. The Emperour said, I will probe you, and if it be, that I find you true, you shall have of me great Rewards and Thanks. They said, We ask nothing but the half of the Gold which by us shall be found. The Emperour said, I am well content.

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And thus they had with the Emperour many Words. At Night when the Emperour was going to Bed, they said unto him, My Lord, if it please you this Night shall the eldest of us set his Cunning a work and Dream: The third Day he shall shew you his Dream, and what it signifieth. The Emperour said, go in God's Name. And they went forth with great Gladness; and this Night they passed with great Joy and Mirth, upon trust they should come to a good purpose. When the third Day was come, they went early to the Emperour: The first said, My Lord, please you to go with us without one of the Gates of the City, and I will shew where there is a Tun full of Gold hid. The Emperour said, I shall go with you and see if it be true that you say. And when they were come to the place, they drew out the Tun, that they before there had put; the Emperour when he saw that, was glad, and gave them their part. Then said the second Dreamer, My Lord, this Night I shall dream. Then the Emperour said, God give you a good Dream; the next Night came, and he took out the other Tun and gave it to the Emperour, and took also his Share. In the like manner the third & the fourth; upon which the Emperour was out of all measure ioyous, and said, He had not seen such true and expert Southsayers, or Dreamers as they were. Then said they all of them together, as if it had been out of one Mouth, My Lord, we have all one after another dreamed, the which you have seen, they be all proved: But now if it pleaseth you that we Dream altogether this Night; we trust that to us shall be shewed, that

that we shall find a great quantity of Gold and
Riches. The Emperour said, God give you a good
Dream, which to me and you may be profitable.
On the next Morrow they came again unto the
Emperour, and said unto him with Countenance
full of Joy, My Lord, we bring good and profita-
ble Tydings; for this Night, in our Sleeps, so
great a Treasure is to us shewed, the which if you
will suffer it to be sought, you shall be so enriched,
that in this World none shall be like unto you.
The Emperour said, Where shall we find this
Treasure? They said, Under the Foundation
of the Tower that the Images stand upon. The
Emperour answered, God defend I should, for
the Love of Gold, destroy the Tower with the
Images, wherewith we from our Enemies be
defended and warned. They said to him again,
My Lord, Have you found us in our Sayings o-
therwise than true? The Emperour said, Nay. O
Lord, (said they) we with our own hand shall give
out the Gold, without hurting the Tower, or the
Images. And it is expedient (that secretly in the
Night) by us it be done, for dread of resort and
concourse of the People, lest that it should run in
the clamour of them, and they take that good Gold
away from you and us. The Emperour said, Go
in the name of God, and do your best as you will,
or can, and I shall to Morrow early come to you.
Then went they with Gladness, and in the
Night were let into the Tower, and then with
great haste and diligence they undermined it, and on
the next Day, very early in the Morning, mounted

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upon their Horses, and rode again towards their own Countrey with Joy and Glory, and e'er they came without the sight of Rome, the Tower fell down on the Morning ensuing. When it was fallen, and the Senators it perceived, they sorrowed greatly, and there was a great bewailing throughout all the City: and they went unto the Emperour, and said, Lord, how may it be that this Tower is thus fallen, by the which we have always had warning afore of our Enemies? He answered and said, To me came four false Deceivers, and feigned themselves to be Soutylayers, and that they could find Treasure in the Ground, and said, That under the Foundation of the Tower was hidden an innumerable Summ of Gold, the which they should undermine without hurting the Tower and Images: I gave faith to them, and they have deceived me. They answered, We have coveted so much Gold, that for your unsatiate Covetousness we shall all be destroyed: but first your Covetousness shall fall upon your self. Then they took him and led him to the Capitol, and laid him on his Back, and poured his Mouth full of molten Gold; saying to him, You have desired Gold, and therefore you shall drink Gold: And after that, they buried him quick. Not long after that, came the Enemy against the Romans, and overcame and destroyed them all.

Then said the Emperess unto the Emperour, Have ye, my Lord, this Example well understood? And he said, Right well. Then said she, The Tower with Images is your Body with the Members: as long as you

you live there is none so hardy to trouble as to make War upon you, nor upon your People; that hath your Son right well understood, and doth with the Seven Masters and their false Narrations or Fables, seek how they might destroy you; for you are over much covetous to encline to them, insomuch that they shall undermine you, and cast you under foot, and bring you to nought: The Images are your Five Wits that be all lost; and forasmuch as you be foolish, they shall destroy you, and your Son shall obtain your Empire.

The Emperour said, We have recited a good Example; wherefore it shall not happen to me as to the Tower, but my Son first this Day shall taste the bitterness of death. To whom the Emperours said, If ye do so, ye shall spend well, and live long. Upon the same Day he commanded his Son to be led to hanging; and as he was led toward the Gallows, came riding against him upon an Horse the fifth Master toward the Palace, who came before the Emperour and saluted him with all reverence; but he despised his Salutation, and put him in fear of his life. The Master said unto the Emperour, My Lord, I have not selected for to die; and to despise my Salutation, it is not for your Honour: For your Son hath not with us, been of such condition, as ye repute him, as ye in short time shall find; and that he speaketh not, is of his great wisdom: And know ye, that he shall well speak as his time cometh, though he now speaketh not, as you in short time shall hear. But that he would have shamed your Wife, believe not, for so wise a Man as he is, would never

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never attempt so shameful a Deed : and if you put him to death for your Wife's words, ye shall not escape without shame and vengeance, like as Ippocras escaped not without vengeance for the death of Gallienus his Cousin. The Emperour said, That I would fain hear and understand. Then said the Master, What would it avail me to tell you this Narration for your profit, if in the mean season your Son should die? Wherefore if you will call again your Son, it shall be discovered at your pleasure, after do as you think best. The Emperour had call again his Son, and set him in Prison, and then began the Master to tell on the manner as followeth.

The Example of the Fifth Master.

Sometimes there was a famous Physician named Ippocras, right cunning, who excelled all others in Learning and Science : He had with him his Nephew Gallienus, the which he loved so much. This Gallienus was of excellent wit, and applied all his mind and wit to learn of his Uncle the Science of Physick. When Ippocras perceived that, insomuch as he could, he hid from him his cunning, fearing he should excel him in that Knowledge, for the great wit he was of.

As Gallienus saw this, he studied and exercised, insomuch that in short time he had perfect cunning in Physick, for the which Ippocras envied him much. It happened upon a time hereafter, that the King of Hungary sent his Messenger unto Ippocras, that he should come unto him, for to cure his Son. Ippocras excused himself,
and

and sent his Cousin Gallienus with Letters of his excuse for his not coming. When Gallienus was come before the King, he was worshipfully received, and they marvelled Ippocras would not come. He excused him, saying, That he had many great things to do, and he might not come, but hath sent me in his stead; and with the help of God, I shall make whole the Child. That pleased very well the King. Gallienus went to the Child, and when he had seen the Ulcer, and touched his Pulses, he said to his Queen: O excellent Princess, I pray you hear and suffer my words, and tell me who is the Father of the Child. She said, Who should be the Father, but my Lord the King? Gallienus said, I am sure he is not the Father. She answered, If you will say that for a truth, I shall cause your Head to be smote off. He answered, I say once again, that this King is not the Father, and I am not come hither to lose my Head, for I have not deserved any such reward, and was going his way. The Queen spake, O good Master Gallienus, if you will keep it secret, and not discover me, I shall open unto you my Heart. The Master said, God defend that from me, that I to any Person should shew it; and therefore, O noble Queen, shew it boldly to me, for it shall never pass my Mouth, and I shall make your Son whole. She said, If ye do that, ye shall have a good reward; hear therefore what I shall say: By fortune came hither unto my Lord, the King of Burgundy, and he was so long conuersant with me, that this Child by him I bear. Then said the Master,
Fear

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fear not, I knew it was so before. And anon he gave the Child Medicines, and compounded things wherewith to eat and drink, and the Child was eased of his Infirmitie. And when the King heard that the Child was recovered of his sickness, he gave unto the Master a good reward; but of the Quæen he secretly received a great gift, and special thanks, and so went his ways. And when he was come home, Ippocras his Master demanded of him, saying, Have ye beheld the Child? And he said, Yea. Then asked he him what he gave him, either compounds, or uncompounded things? Then said Ippocras, That Mother of the Child is not true to her Husband. That is truth, saith Gallienus. Then Ippocras was moved with envy, and thought in himself, If there be not found a remedy, my Sciences shall be no more set by, but he shall be praised above me. And from that Day forward he devised how he might slay him. Upon a Day Ippocras called him, and said, Come go with me to seek and gather Herbs in the Garden. To whom he said, Master I am ready. And when they were come into the Garden, Ippocras said, I see that this Herb is right vertuous, stoop down and gather me of it. And Gallienus did so. And as they went about the Garden, said Ippocras, Now I well perceive the odour of this Herb, that is more precious than Gold; and therefore stoop down to the ground, and draw it out with the root, for it is much worth. Gallienus bowed down himself to pull out the Herb, and Ippocras drew out his Knife and killed him. After that, Ippocras fell sick to the death, that the
strength



Strength of his Body to help him, and did as much
as he could to help him, but that could not be.
And as the Scholars and Disciples heard of it, they
went hastily unto him, and did all they might or
could, for profit of his health, but it abailed them
nothing.

When Ippocras this perceived, he said unto his
Scholars: Fetch me a great Tun, and fill it full
to the brim with Water. And when they had so
done, he said unto them, Make now therein an
hundred holes. And when that was also done, there
went none of the Water out. Then said Ippo-
cras, Behold, my most dear Disciples, how the ven-
geance of God is fallen upon me, as you may o-
penly see! For in this Tun are an hundred holes,
and goeth not thereout any drop: Right so there
cometh no virtue out of the Herbs to help me; and
therefore what ye do unto me, helpeth not, for I
must die. But, my dear Children, if my Nephew
Gallienus

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Gallienus were-alsbe he could heal me, whom I have slain, and that griebeth me sore, and therefore the vengeance of God cometh upon me. And this said, he turned to the Wall, and gave up the ghost. Then said the Master unto the Emperoz, My Lord, Understand you weil what I have said? He answered, Yea, right well: What hurt had it been to him, if Gallienus had liued?

The Master answered, It had been better for Ippocras at that time, had he not died; and therefore by the right wise Judgment of God, his Medicines abailed him not; and therefore I shewed to you, that it shall happen worse to you, if that you put to death your Son, for the words of your Wife, who, in time of necessity, shall ease and succour you. And consider you not, that ye have, after the first Wife, wedded this Wife that ye now have, and so you may the thirde and fourth, and never shall ye have such a Son that shall save you from perill. The Emperoz said, Truly he shall not die.

Then said the Master, Then do you that becometh the wisdom of your Years, and the royalty of your Person, and I commend you to God, and I thank you that ye have this Day for me spared your Son. The Emperoz said, I mark this well, that Women are very crafty; therefore I will not for you, but for my self spare him.

The Sixth Complaint of the Empress.

When the Empress had knowledge thereof, she shewed her self impatient, that all that saw her, or heard her, wondred, and said to the

the Emperoz, Your Wife pineth as though she would shortly die. The Emperoz hearing thereof, went to her, and said, Wherefore (good Lady) be you so impatient? She answered, saying, O Lord, how should I hold it in, when I am the only Daughter of a King, and your Wife, and in your company I have had great despite, and you have promised to punish him, but perform it not! The Emperoz said, I wot not what to do; ye labour to have my Son put to death, and the Masters labour to save his life; and amongst these I know he is my Son, but where the truth is, that I know not. Then said she, this is the cause whereof I complain, that ye believe the Masters more than me; and therefore it shall happen to you, as it did to a King and his Steward.



Then said the Emperoz. Tell me that Example, peradventure it may move me sooner to put my Son to death. She said, Gladly; but I pray give attention to what I say. And began as ensueth.

The

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The Sixth Example of the Empress.

There was a King most proud and deformed in his Uilage, so that all Women hated him. The King thought to destroy all Rome, and carry away the Bodies of Peter and Paul; who, while he was in the mind, called his Steward that was secretly with him of his Privy-Council, and said unto him, Go seek a faire Woman that this Night may sleepe with me. The Steward answered, My Lord, ye know your Infirmitie, and no Woman would do evil without a great sum of Money. The King said. Think you for my Money I will want one! Have I not Gold and Silver enough? Though it were a thousand Florents, I would it give. The Steward hearing that, was smitten with Covetousness, and went to his Wife, which was faire, chaste, and of good kindred, and said to her, O my good Wife, my Lord desireth to sleepe with a vertuous Woman, and would not forbear it, though he ask a thousand Florents; and hath commanded me for to provide him one: Therefore I counsel you, that you may get that Money. The Wife said, Were it so that the King were not so Proud, and full of Uilage, yet would I not consent for the sin against God. The Steward said, I command you, and promise you, that without you consent herein, ye shall never have a good Day with me. She hearing that, trembled, in so much that for fear she consented unto him.

The Steward then went unto the King, and said, Sir, I have found a faire Woman, and she is
come

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come of a very good House, which will not have less than a thousand Florents; in the evening she shall come, and early in the morning must go away, that she be not seen. The King answered, I am contented. When Night was come, the Steward led his Wife to the King's Bed, made fast the door, and went his way. Early in the morning the Steward arose, and went unto the King, and said, My Lord, it will be Day within a while, it is good you perform your promise, and let the Woman go. The King said, This Woman pleaseth me so well, that so soon she should not depart. When he heard that, he departed all sorry, and tarried a while, and came to the King again, and said, My Lord, the morning is come, therefore let the Woman go, and as I promised her, lest she be ashamed. The King said, Yet shall she not go; therefore go out, and shut the door. The Steward right sorrowful departed, and went up and down with a heavy heart, till the clear Day appeared: Then he entered again into the Chamber, and said, My Lord, it is clear day, suffer the Woman to depart, that she be not ashamed. The King answered, I say she shall not yet depart, for her company is to me well pleasing. The Steward hearing that, could no longer forbear to hold his own counsel, but said, O my good Lord, I beseech you suffer her to depart, for it is my own Wife. The King hearing that, said to him, Open the Window; and when it was open, the bright Day appeared, and he beheld the Woman fair, and perceived it was the Wife of the Steward, and said, O thou stain of Mar- hood, and

Name

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shame of the Creation! Why hast thou for so little Money shamed thy good Wife, and delivered her unto me unwitting? Therefore haste thee, and get thee out of my Realm, and never come in my sight; for if ever I see thee, thou shalt die the most shameful death that can be imagined. When the Steward heard that, he fled, and durst not abide, and never more came into the Realm. And the King kept that Wife all his life-time in great honour, and gave her plenty of all things that to her appertained.

After that, the King caused to be assembled a mighty Army of puissant Men of War, and went to the City of Rome with great might, and besieged it on all sides, until the Romans would have delivered to him (for to have withdrawn himself from thence) the Bodies of the Holy Apostles, St. Peter and Paul.

Then there was in the City Seven Wise Masters, as ye now have, by the Counsel of whom all the City was governed. And the Citizens came unto them, and said, What shall we do? It behoves us that we give unto our Enemies the Bodies of the Holy Apostles, or the City. Then answered the first Master, I shall with my Wisdom this Day save the City, and the Bodies of the Apostles. And so every one of them promised for one Day to do the like, in like manner as your Masters have promised your Son. With that the King began to assault the City in all parts. Then began the first Master to alledge so wisely to have Peace, that the King that day left his Assault, and withdrew a little from the City. And so

so did all the Masters one after another, till the
 last; unto whom came the Burgeis of the City,
 and said, O Master, ye shall understand, that the
 King hath sworn, that to morrow with all his
 strength he will win the City, and we must all be in
 jeopardy to lose our Libes: Therefore acquitting
 your promise, defend us from danger, like as
 your Fellows before you have done. Then an-
 swered the Master, Fear not, for to morrow I
 shall by my cunning shew such an operation, that
 the King and all his Might should leave the Stage.
 The next Day the King gave a great assault to the
 City: Then went the Master and cloathed himself
 in a marvellous strange Vesture, having therein
 the Feathers of Peacocks, and other Fowls of di-
 vers Colours, and took two bright Swords in
 each hand one, and went therewith, and stood up-
 on the highest Tower of the City, and began to
 move and turn; and shew himself towards the Host,
 so that they might all behold him; and he held
 in his mouth the two bright Swords that marvel-
 lously shined. They without the King's Host be-
 holding that, said unto him, O King, behold on the
 top of yonder Tower a wonderful thing! Hea,
 quoth he, I see it right well, it is marvellous;
 but what it is I know not. They said, It is the
 God of Christian Folks, that is come out of Hea-
 ven to lay us with two Swords if we longer a-
 bide. The King hearing that, trembled for fear,
 and said, What shall we do? There is but one way,
 and that is, that we depart from hence, lest their
 God revenge himself upon us. Then began the

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King with his host to die: Notwithstanding there was no need, for they of the Master was deceived. When the Romans saw that, they hastily pursued them, well armed, and slew the King, with many of the People, and in that manner (by great subtilty of the Masters) was the mighty King with his Army subdued. Then said the Empress unto the Emperor, Lord, have you understood what I have said? He said, Yea, with good attention. She said, Now you have heard what I said unto you at the beginning of this Narration of the Steward that the King trusted to much, which for covetousness shamed his own Wife, and for that was banished out of the Land: In like manner your Son, for the desire he hath to the Empire, intendeth to destroy you: But whilst he is in your power, do with him as the King did with his Steward. If you will not put him to death, then put him out of your Empire, that ye may live in safeguard of your life. And have you also heard how the King lay before Rome, and how he was by the Wise Masters deceived, and he, with his followers were slain? In like manner the Seven Wise Masters intended to deal with you, and with crafty Wiles deceive you, and in the end traiterously murder you, that so your Son might reign in your Empire. Whereupon answered the Emperor, That shall not be, for to morrow my Son shall die. Then he commanded his Servants forthwith to lead his Son to Execution. When the People heard these things, they gathered in great troops, much lamenting the death of the Empe-
rore's

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for's Son. And as soon as the Arth Master heard
 thereof, he hasted to the Emperors Court, and sa-
 luted him with reverence, but he disdainfully
 threatned him that he should be put to death with
 his Son, for he was with them made dumb, and a
 Ribauld, which was shewed towards his Wife.
 The Master replied, I have not deserved to die
 with your Son, but to have large Gifts; for he is
 not dumb, as you shall hear within three Days, if
 he may live so long; but if you put him to death
 for the Words of your Wife, then I shall marvel
 at your Wisdom, and without doubt it shall hap-
 pen to you, as sometimes it happened to a Knight
 that so much allowed the saying of his Wife, that
 he was bound to an Horse tail, and drawn through
 the City to the Gallows. The Emperour said,
 For the love of God shew me that Example, that
 I may beware of that evil. That I will not do,
 said the Master, without you call again your Son.
 Then he commanded to call back his Son: And
 the Master began as followeth.

The Example of the Sixth Master.

Sometimes there was an Emperour of Rome
 which had three Knights, whom he loved a-
 bove all others: In the same City there was an
 ancient Knight that had married a fair young Wife,
 which above all things he loved, as you do the
 Empress. The Lady could sing with such sweet-
 nels, that many desired her company. It befell
 on a season, as she sat in the House, her Misage

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turned to the Street that she might see them that walked by, and began sweetly to sing, that all Folkes delighted to hear her. By chance came that way a Knight of the Emperors Court that heard her voice, and beholding her with a willing mind and attentive ear, he was exceedingly taken in love: And entering the House, fell into talk with her greatly, but chiefly of love; and amongst other talk, he demanded of her, what he should give her to keep by her side one Night? She answered, An hundred Florents. Then said the Knight, Tell me when I shall come, and I will give it you. Sir, quoth she, when I have convenient time, I shall send for you. The next Day she sung in the same place, and the second Knight of the Emperors Court came by that way, who likewise was smitten in her love, and he also promised her an hundred Florents. To whom she made the like promise. The third Day came to her another Knight, and unto him likewise she consented; and he promised her an hundred Florents, if she should give him knowledge of the time, which she also promised. These three Knights having so secretly spoken with the Lady, that not one of them had knowledge of one anothers coming unto her. Now the Lady was deceitful, and came to her Husband, and said, Sir, I have a secret matter to shew you; wherein, if you follow my counsel, our poverty you may largely relieve. The Knight replied, Tell it me, and I will keep it as secret as my life, and fulfil it to the utmost of my power. She answered, Three Knights of the Emperors Court have been with me, one after another,

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in such wise, that none of them knoweth of another's counsel, and each Knight offered me an hundred Florents. Might we an hundred Florents get, and no man know it, shou'd not our poverty be well reliev'd? Then said the Knight, Yea; therefore whatsoever you will counsel me, I shall willingly perform. Then said she, I give you counsel, that when the Knights shall come with their Florents, you shall stand behind the Gate with your Sword drawn, and as they come (being they come one after another) you shall slay them, and so we shall have the three hundred Florents they bring, without any Man's knowledge. The Knight answered, O my best beloved Wife, I fear this evil cannot be hid, and we shall therefore suffer death if it were known. She answered, I shall this work begin, and therefore make a good end, fear not. When the Knight saw she was so hardy, it caused him to be more bold. Then he sent for the first Knight, and he came, without tarrying, to the Gate, and knocked. And she asked if he had brought the hundred Florents? He answered, I have brought them. Then she let him in, and he had no sooner entered, but her Husband murdered him. Immediately came the second Knight, and in like manner was slain. And not long after came the third Knight, whom also he slew. Having finished the butchery, they conveyed the murdered Bodies into a secret Chamber. When they had thus done, the Knight said unto the Lady, O dear Wife, if these dead Bodies should be found with us, we shall die the most shameful

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Death that can be imagined, for it is not possible but these three Knights will be missed in the Emperors Court, and great search will be made for them throughout the City. She answered, and said, Sir Knight, I have now this Work begun, and will make a good end, fear it not, I have said. This Lady had a Brother, which had the Government of the Wealth of the City, that on Nights watched in the Streets with his fellows. She stood at the Gate, and called unto her Brother, and said, O, my best beloved Brother, I have a secret matter, which I would not make it known, therefore come in with me, and I will relate it unto you. And when he was entered the House, the Lady received him friendly, and gave him Wine, and said, My beloved Brother, this is the cause I have called you, for I have much need of your good Counsel. The Brother answered, Speak boldly, and whatsoever I may do to my power, shall be at your desire without any letting. Then said she, Yesterday came a Knight in friendship, but afterwards he fell into such variance with my Husband, that he slew him, and he lieth here dead in my Chamber. Now, my dear Brother, we have no Man that we may trust, but only you: And if this dead body be found in our House, we shall be put to death. Now she mentioned but one. Her Brother said, Deliber him me in a Sack, and I will bear him to the Sea. She hearing that, was glad thereof, and delivered him the Body of the first Knight. He took it, and went a good space, and cast him therein: And as soon as this was done,

done, he came to his Sister, and said to her, Give me of the best Wine, for you are of him too, and she gave him Thanks, and went to her Chamber, as though she had gone for Wine, and began, to cry aloud, The Knight that was cast into the Sea is come again. As her Brother heard that, he marvelled sore and said, Give me him, I shall see if he will rise again, and took the second Knight (supposing it had been the Body of the first) and went to the Sea, and with a Stone drowned him. That done, he went again to his Sister, and said, Now fill me a Cup of good Wine, for I have drowned him so deep, that he shall never come again. Then said she, Thanks be to God, and went again to her Chamber, and feigned to fetch Wine, and cried aloud, Alas! he is risen again, and is come out of the Sea! And as her Brother heard that, with a great marvel he said, What Devil is this that I have cast into the Water, and yet he is come again? Deliver him me the third time, and I shall see if he will come again. Then she gave him the third Knight which he believed had been the first, and went without the City to a great Forrest, and made a great Fire to cast him therein, and when he was almost burnt, the Brother went a little distance to do his need. Then came a Knight that was to ride to the City, where in the Morning should be a Turney and Jousting: It was cold Weather, and dark, and not far from the City; and when he saw the Fire, he drew therto, and alighted and warmed him.

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The Watch-man came and said, What art thou? The Knight said, I am a Knight. Then said the Watch-men thou art no Knight, but a Devil, for I first cast thee into the Water, then with a great Stone I drowned thee, and the third time I put thee into this Fire, supposing thou hadst been burnt, and yet thou standest here: And then he took the Knight with his Horse, and cast them both into the Fire. After that, he went unto his Sister, and told what happened, and said, Now bring me the best Wine; for after I had burnt him, I found him again by the Fire with a Horse, and have cast them both into the Fire; and by this his Sister perceived he had burnt a Knight of the Turney: who anon brought him the Wine abundantly; and after he had well drunk, he departed thence. Not long after, there fell a great contention betwixt the Knight and his Wife, so that he smote her; and she had indignation thereof, being Angry, and said that many heard her: O Wretch! wilt thou kill me, as thou didst the three Knights? Certain Men hearing that, laid hands on them, and brought them to the Emperour; and the Woman confessed that her Husband had slain the three Knights of the Emperour's, and how he took from them Three hundred Florents. And it being so found, both were drawn at a Horse-Tail and hanged. Then said the Master to the Emperour, Have ye understood what I have said? He answered, Right well: I say, for certain, that Wife was the worst Woman that might be; for first she moved him to murder, and afterwards discovered him. The Master said,

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said, Without doubt it shall happen to you wife, if you put your Son to Death by Advice of your Wife. The Emperoz said, My Son shall not die this Day. The Master hearing that, gave Thanks to the Emperoz, took leave, and went his way.

The Seventh Complaint of the Empress.

When the Empress heard the Emperoz's Son was yet living, as a Mad-Woman, she ran to the Emperoz weeping, and saying, O unhappy Woman! What shall I do? I must needs lay my self that am ashamed, and no Punishment thereupon done. The Emperoz answered, God defend that you should have mind on such a wicked deed; suffer a while, and you shall have a good end. She answered, Sir, the end shall be evil; for of that shall follow us great confusion. The Emperoz said, Leave off such talk. She said, Lord, it shall come to you and to your Son, as to a King and his Steward. I pray tell that Example. She said, I will gladly; but I fear you will hear me no more; for next Day the Seventh Master shall speak, and save your Son from Death as the other Sir have done; and when your Son shall speak, of whose Words you shall have such Joy and Delectation, that the Love betwixt us shall be wholly forgotten. The Emperoz said, That is impossible; for I shall never forget your Love.

Then said she, My best beloved Lord, if it please you, I will tell you one Example by which you shall beware of many Perils, especially of your accursed Son, who intendeth to destroy me by his Masters

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Matters. The Emperoz said, Tell on. And the Emperors began to tell as hereafter followeth.



The Seventh Example of the Empress.

There was a King which loved his Wife above all things, insomuch that he closed her within a strong Castle, and bare the Keys thereof himself: The Lady was therefore heavy and comfortless. Now in far Countries there was a valiant Knight, which lying on his Bed dreamed he saw one of the fairest Queens that ever Eye beheld, whose Love above all others he desired to obtain, and if he might see her walk he should certainly have some knowledge of her, by whom to him great Friendship and Honour should come. To the Queen, the same Night, by Vision of the same Knight, the like was also shewed, and as yet they had no knowledge of each other, neither of

of Name or Fame. When the Knight had thus dreamed, and seen (as he thought) a most vertuous and comely Lady, he determined, that his foot should take no rest till he had found out the Lady, that in his Dream seemed so Glorious. And having took Horse, and all that was necessary for his Journey, he travelled throughout divers Regions, Countries, and Kingdoms, till at last he came into the Land where this Queen was by her jealous Husband kept in a strong Castle. When this Knight was come unto the City, and had for a Season therein sojourned, it fell out, that as the Knight walked by the Castle, (and knew not as then that the Queen was therein kept) she was at that time sitting in the Window to see the People pass by, and amongst others, she espied the Knight and knew him to be the Man of whom she had dreamed before. The Knight by chance lifted up his Eyes, and perceived a Lady in a Window, and his Mind gave him, that it was she of whom he had dreamed, and she began a Song in Love. As he heard that, he was taken with her Love. That Knight from thenceforth daily walked about the Castle beholding it all over, to espy if any way he might get in, to declare his Mind unto her. The Lady perceiving that, presently endited a Letter, and secretly conveyed it unto him from the Casement of her Chamber-Window, which when he had perused, and understanding the Will of the Lady, he began to haunt Jousts and Tournaments, and did perform so many marvellous Acts, that the Fame of him came to the Ears of the King:
And

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And as soon as the King heard thereof, he sent after him, and said unto him, Sir Knight, I have heard that you have got much Honour at our Jousts and Tournaments; wherefore if it please you to abide here and dwell with us, we shall give you a large Reward. The Knight answered, O mighty Prince, I am your Servant, I would I could do any Service that would please your Magnificence, without taking any Reward, save one thing before all other I desire. The King said, Shew unto me boldly what that is. The Knight answered, My Lord, seeing that it hath pleased your most Excellent Majesty to take me for your Servant, and one of your grave Counsel, it seemeth to me most expedient for both our Delights, that I have a place near the Wall of the Castle, that I at all times might be more ready at your call, when you need. The King answered, I consent, make it as you think best. Then the Knight caused many Workmen to be brought, and having so done, he chose out certain for his purpose, and caused them to build him a fair Lodging near the Walls of the Tower. This being finished, he made a Covenant with one of the Workmen, (whom he thought fittest) to make a secret way to the Queen's Lodgings. And when this was finished, he killed the Work-man, because he should not make it known. Having thus done, he went in unto the Queen, and did her Reverence as he came him, and they discoursed of many matters. Having thus passed the Day, the Night drawing on, he desired he might sleep by her one Night, but

but she often denied him; yet nevertheless consented unto his Request, Now they having spent the Night in Pleasure, and Morning being come, the Knight returned to his Lodgings, and the Queen began to think with her self, what shall I do, if I should make my Husband acquainted herewith? Two Evils would come thereof; the one is my Shame, and peradventure he would utterly forsake me, and cause me to be driven out of the Land for ever. The other is, that he would slay the Knight, for Death it is not possible for him to escape, therefore I think it more expedient to be secret therein, than to reveal it. After that, the Knight as often as it pleased him, went in unto the Queen, and did his Will with her; and she gave him a Ring which the King had given her at her Wedding. This Knight was so famous in Jousting, that in every Battle and Tournament he had the Victory: For which cause he was in great Favour with the King, so that he made him Steward and Governour over all his Land.

It happened on a Day, that the King disposed to ride a Hunting, and commanded his Steward to be ready on the Morrow to go with him: Whereupon he offered himself willingly. On the Morrow they entered the Forrest, all Day chasing the wild Beasts, and were so weary that the King sat down by a Fountain to rest, and the Knight by his Side: The Knight was no sooner set, but he fell asleep by the King, having the Ring on his Finger, which the Queen had given him: which the King perceiving, knew it well. When
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the Knight awaked, and perceiuing the King had
seen the Ring, he feigned himself to be sore Sick,
and said, My honoured Lord, I feel my self so Sick,
that if I do not haste me unto my Lodging, and
seek out some present Remedy, either by Physick,
or some other course, I am but a dead Man, there-
fore I pray you give me leave to go home. To
whom the King made this Answer, Go, dear
Friend, in the Name of God, and see there be
nothing wanting to procure thy Health, that my
Court or Kingdom can afford. The King had no
sooner ended his Speech, but immediately the
Knight took leave, and getting upon his Horse, he
hasted to his House, and as soon as he was come
home he lighted, and hasted to the Queen's Lodg-
ings, and gave her the Ring again, and told her
withal, how the King had espied it upon his Fin-
ger, when they were both sat down to rest: With-
al, he told her, that he feigned himself to be very
Sick, for which cause the King gave him leave to
return to his Lodgings: He also prayed her that
if the King at any time should call for the Ring,
she should shew it unto him. This done, he took
his leave of her, and went again unto his Lodging.
Not long after the King came home to the Queen,
and she received him right lovingly; and after a
little time had passed, the King said unto her,
My Renowned Lady, shew me the Ring that I
gave you, for I have a great desire to see it. She
answered, O, my best beloved Lord, why at this
time do you desire to see it? Then said he, If you
shew it not to me incontinently, it shall repent
you

you. Then she stole and took her Cabinet, and took the King out of it: And having thus done, she brought it to her husband, and when he had seen it, he was half ashamed, and said, My best beloved Queen, How like is that Knight's Ring unto this, which I saw upon his Finger? For I believe it had been mine, and that was the cause I did ask so hastily for it. And of this suspicion I yield my self guilty, my dear Lady, in this behalf: The strength of the Tower deceived me, for I thought none could get therein but my self alone, in regard none had the keeping of the Keys but my self. She said unto him, My dear Lord, wonder not, for one King may be like another, and Workmen seldom make one piece of work, but others make the same: But God forgive you in that you have suspected me; for you know the strength of the Tower, and the Keys you have always in your presence, and trust no Man therewith. After that, the Knight ordained a great Dinner, and said unto the King, My Sovereign, my Lady and Love is come from out of my Country to seek me, for whose sake I have ordained a Dinner, and would intreat your Highness to do me the Honour, as to dine with me this Day, and take such Meat as shall be provided. The King answered, Most willingly will I do you that worship, and more. The Knight was glad thereof, and by his secret way went unto the Queen, and said unto her, My beloved Lady, you must do thus: Come to my House the private way, and cloath your self richly, and deck your self with Jewels, and other Dyna-

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ments,

The Seven Wife

ments, according to the custom of my Country; then shall you sit at Table with my King, as my Sovereign Lady, and make good cheer. She replied, Sir Knight, I am ready to do according to your desire. When the time appointed was near, and the King coming from the Castle towards the Knight's House, in the mean time by the secret way the Queen entered the Knight's Lodgings, (before the King could come) and apparelled herself after the manner of the Knight's Country. When the King entered the House, she with Courteous Salutations received him; and when the King had beheld her, he demanded of the Knight what Woman she should be that seemed so fair? Then answered the Knight, My Renowned Lord, it is my Sovereign Lady, that for the love she beareth me, is come out of my Country after me, to know why I should absent my self so long from her love and service. The Speeches being ended, the Knight caused the Queen to sit down at the Table, and made the Queen to sit by him. The King thought it was his Queen, and said within himself, O how like is this Woman unto my Wife! So the strength of the Tower did deceive him, that he gave more credit unto the Knight's words, than to his own eyes. The Queen began to talk to the King, and for to stir him to eat and drink, and make good cheer. And as the King heard the voice, he said unto himself, O, blessed Lord, how like is this Woman to my Queen, in her behaviour, speech, visage, and in all other conditions! And all the strength of the Tower

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Tower deceived him. In the end of the Feast, the Knight prayed his beloved Lady to sing before the King, and she began to sing a Song of Love. When the King heard her, he knew her voice, and thought unto himself, Is not this my Wife? And yet how can this be? I having the Keys of the Tower my self in keeping! So all Dinner-time the King sat debating thus within himself. Dinner ended, he willed the Knight forthwith to take up the Table, he having urgent occasions that moved him thereunto, for he was sore troubled in Mind. Whereupon the Knight said, My Lord, What is the reason you are so melancholy? What is that discontenteth you? Be not troubled, if it please you we shall make you some pleasant sport. And the Gentlewoman said, My beloved Lord, if it please you with us to abide, we shall make you all the delight that this place can afford; if your Queen her self was here, she could not give you more content. Whereupon the King began to be angry, and said, Take away the Table, for I may no longer abide here, until that I have resolved my mind. Thereupon the Knight straightway obeyed the King, and took up the Table, giving Thanks to all, but especially to the King his Sovereign Lord and Master.

Now the King departed, and went with all haste into the Castle, to see whether that his Queen were therein or not: But in the mean time she went in at the Byby-dooz, and stripped off her uppermost Vesture, and put her self into the same Habit the King left her at-

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fired with. When the King entred therein, he found the Queen in the same cloathing he had left her in before; and saying all fell out contrary to his expectation, he kindly embraced her, and lovingly kissed her, and said unto her, This Day have I eaten with my Knight, and with his loving Lady, who came out of her Countrey unto my Court to find him out, who being met and overjoyed in the sight of her, did presently ordain a great Feast, and humbly entreated me to do him so much Grace, as to accompany him at his Feast. Whereupon I answered him, That for the love I did bear him, I would do him that honour, and much more if requested; whom I having beheld, he seemed to me so fair, that since I was born, mine eyes have not seen one so like as he is to you, insomuch that all Dinner-time I was troubled with many matters, and could hardly endure unto the end of the Feast, but that I must come to see whether you were here or there.

Then the Queen answered him, O mighty King, wherefore do you mistrust me, having often found the contrary? Do you not know that this Tower is so fast, strong, and invincible, that no Man can enter in or out without your knowledge? For you always keep the Keys, and will not trust any therewith, how then is it possible I should be there? You may find one Man like another: You remember of late how you did mistake the Knight's Ring; And have you more Arguments of suspicion against me? Was it not sufficient to detain me of liberty these many Years, but you must needs be jealous besides? I tell you, O noble King, if
you

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you do not forsake your Jealousie, and release me out of Imprisonment before thre Days be expired, I will end my Days herein, for I had rather live a Servant at Liberty, than a Queen in Prison. The King answered, All that you have objected is true, of which I acknowledge my self guilty; wherefore have patience for a few Days, and assure as I reign King of this Country, I will set you at liberty. And so he lovingly embraced her with a Kiss, and returned to his own Lodgings. Now he had not rested above two Days, but the Knight came and said unto the King, O my honourable Lord, I have long served your Highness; now it is time I return into my own Country; and for all the service that I have done unto you, I desire nothing but this one thing before my departure; which is to give to me before the Priest, with your own hand, in the Church, my beloved Lady whom I intend to wed, who followed me out of far Countries for Love, and whom I shall bring thither again, as my lawful and true Wife, which will be to me great honour when I come into my Country. The King answered, That Petition, and more than that, (if you will desire it) will I gladly fulfil. When the King prefixed the Day of Marriage. When the good King came to Church honourably attended, the Priest was ready (adorned with his Vestments) to solemnize the Matrimony. The Knight apparelled the Queen in his own House, after the manner of his own Country, and ordained two Knights to lead her to the Church, who believed

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it had been his Paramour. When they were come to the Church, the Priest said, Who shall give this Woman to this Knight? The King said, I shall give her unto her own Knight. And took her by the hand, and said, O good Woman, you are so like my Queen, that my love is to you the greater, and also, because you shall be wedded to this Knight whom I affect above all Men, and he shall be of my House. And so put the Queen's hand into the Knight's; and the Priest, after the Order of the Church, bound them, and wedded them together in true and faithful Wedlock. When all these Rites were finish'd, the Knight said unto the King, O most noble Lord, the Ship that I intend to go in towards my Countrey is now furnished for my Journey, and ready to sail away; wherefore I humbly beseech your noble Grace to accompany my beloved Wife, thereunto, and that you would admonish her to love me, and have me in favour above all others living, and so much the rather for your good Counsel. The King, with his followers, (besides others) did accompany them unto the Ship; for whose departure many were exceeding sorrowful and heavy. Then the King began to say unto the Queen, My dear Friend, hearken well unto my Counsel, and see that ye follow it, for it shall be to your profit: My most honoured and beloved Knight hath now wedded and done to you all the honour that in him is; wherefore look that you love, honour, and obey him above all other Men, as God hath commanded, and that you be unto him true in
your

your dealings. As soon as this Speech was ended, he delivered her unto the Knight, saying, My blessing be with you both, and our Lord keep and conduct you safely unto your own Country. Then the Knight and the Queen bowed their heads to the King, and gave him thanks for all the kindnesses that he had done them; and having so done, they committed him to the Ship, and entered into the Ship; the Mariners hoisted sail before the Wind, and within a short space the King lost sight of the Ship; and then e going hastily into the Castle, he went to seek for his Queen; and when he could not find her, he was moved over all the Parts of his Body, and sought about all the Tower, so long, till at last he found out the hole that the Knight had caused to be made; and when he saw that, he wept bitterly, and crying out, Alas! alas! this Knight in whom I had so great confidence, hath robbed me of my Wife! Alas I not a Fool, that gave more faith unto the Words of a Knight than to my own Eyes!

Then said the Empress, My Lord, have you understood what I have said? The Emperor said, As well as may be. Then answered the Empress, Remember how he trusted the Knight, and yet the Knight deceived him: In like manner do you trust the Seven Wise Masters, who labour to destroy me your Wife; and you give more credit to their Words than to your own Eyes; For you have seen how your ungracious Son hath rent and scratched me, whereof yet I bear tokens and marks about me, as you may see; alls you know

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well how your accursed Son hath married me, and you mark not how they defend him in this folly: Therefore it is to be feared that it will happen to you worse than to the King of whom I have spoken unto you.

The Emperour replied, I will believe mine own Eyes before I will give credence to their words, and therefore to Morrow I shall do justice upon my Son. The next Day the Emperour commanded his Son to be brought before him; which being done, he commanded him to be led to the Place of Execution, there to suffer Death according to the Law. When there began to arise great noise and bewailing amongst the common People, for the death of the Emperour's only Son. At last when the seventh Master heard it, he ran immediately unto the Officers which were leading him to the Gallows, and said, My Friends, I pray you not to make overmuch hast, but stay your hands a while; for I think this Day (with the help of the Almighty God) to save him from all Perils. And from thence the Master hastened him to the Emperour's Palace, and did him Reverence according to his accustomed duty. But the Emperour with great indignation made him this answer, Never more have you any joy in this World, for that you have sent my Son home untaught and dumb, whom I delivered unto you well speaking; for which cause you shall be all put to death with him. The Master answered, O most noble Emperour, the time is not long betwixt this and to Morrow Noon; then (by the Grace of God) you

you shall hear him speak discreetly, and shall declare the truth of all things, and this I promise you he will perform to the full, upon pain of my Life, if you will spare him so long time: if you find it not so, then take my Life, and the Lives of us all. Then said the Emperour, If I might but hear my Son speak, it would give me sufficient content, and I would not desire longer to live. Then answered the Master, all this and more you shall hear and see, and confess it to be true, if you will but abide this little time, and then the Strife that hath been betwixt us and the Emperours will be clearly decided. And if you suffer him to be put to Death through the Words of your most ungodly Wife, I tell you of a truth it shall happen worse to you than it did to a Knight that died for a little Blood that he saw his Wife to bleed, to whom afterwards she was most unnatural. Then said the Emperour, That Example would I fain hear. Then said the Master, Let your Son be called again, and I shall tell you so notable an Example, that during your Life you may beware of the unstableness of Women. Then the Emperour said, I shall go call my Son again, upon Condition, that to Morrow I shall hear him speak as you have promised. The Master said, Do that my Lord, for it shall be so, and began to tell as followeth.

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The Example of the Seventh Master.

There was a Knight that had a fair young Wife, whom he loved entirely, so that he could not be out of her Sight. It happened on a time that they played together at Chels, and the Knight by chance had a Knife in his hand, and he fortuned to smite her Hand on the Knife, so that a little Blood began to appear. When the Knight saw his Wife Bleed, he fell to the Ground in a swoond; his Wife seeing that, cast cold Water on his Face, inso much that he came a little to himself,



and said, lightly, call the Curate with the Holy Sacrament, for I must die; for the Blood that I have been come from your Finger hath smitten Death to my Heart: Then the Priest came, and comforted him much, and administered the Sacrament unto him, and anon he died: For whose Death there was great Sorrow,

Sorrow, especially by his Wife: Also after the Requies were finished, she went and lay upon the Grave, and there made great Lamentation, and said, She would never depart thence, but as a Turtle Dove she would, for the Love of her Husband, there abide and die. Then went her Friends and Neighbours unto her, and said, What availeth this for his Soul, to lye here weeping until you die? It is better that you go home, and there give Alms for the Love of God, and that shall more avail your Soul, than in this place to abide. To whom she answered, I pray you hold your peace: You are evil Counsellors, Consider ye not how I am from him separated by Death, for a little Blood he saw come out of my Finger? Therefore I shall never from hence depart.

Her Friends hearing that, made her a little House nigh the Grave, and putting therein all things necessary, went their ways, thinking within a while she should be weary to be alone, and so desolate from all Company, and thereby desire again the Company of the People.

In the City was then a Law, That if an Offender against the Law were hanged, the Sheriff all Night should watch the dead Body armed; and if it happened that the Body hanged were stolen, the Sheriff should lose all his Lands, and his Life at the King's pleasure. It happened soon after the Knight was dead, that a Man should be hanged for Trespassing, so that the Sheriff all that Night watched by the Gallows, not far from the City, and the Church-Yard was not far from the same

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same : Then began the Sheriff to be so cold, that he could not possibly endure it, but was even ready to die, except he might speedily warm him, it was so extreame cold, and so great a Frost, and by chance he espying a Fire in the Church Ward, he halted and came thereto, and when he was come near to it, he knocked at the little House. The Wloman said, Who at this time knocketh at the House of the sorrowful Wloman? He answered, I am the Sheriff that hath endured much cold, and am ready to freeze to Death, unless without delay you let me warm my self. She said unto him, I fear if that I let you in, ye should cause me to be more heaby. He said, I promise you, that I shall say no Wlodes to your Displeasure. Then she let him in; and when he had sitten a while by the fire, and was well warmed, he said unto her, O, fair Wloman, with your Licence, would I fain speak but one Wlode with you. She answered, Sir, say what pleaseth you. Then he said, O Lady, you be a fair Gentlewoman, Rich and Young, where is it not more convenient for you to dwell at home, and to give Alms, then to waste your self here with Wlleeping? She said, Sir Knight had I known this before, you had not come in; for I say to you as I have said to others oftentimes, you know my Husband loved me so well, that for a little Blood he lets me bleed out of my Finger, he is dead; wherefore I will here die for the love of him. As the Knight heard this, he took leave and went again unto the Gallows; and when he was come thither, and saw that the Thief (he left there hanging)

hanging) was stol'n away, he began to wax hea-
 vy, and said, Woe is me! What shall I do? For
 I have lost my Life, and all my Goods! And going
 up and down thus full of Sorrow, he knew not
 what way to turn himself: At last he concluded to
 go to the desolate Lady, and shew her the heaviness
 of his Heart, to wit, if she could give him any
 good Counsel. When he was come thither, he
 called; and she asked him the cause. And he said,
 Madam, I am the Sheriff that was right now
 with you, and I would fain shew you the Se-
 crets of my Heart, therefore I pray you open the
 Door. And he went in, and said unto her, O
 most vertuous Lady, I am now come to have your
 Advice: for you know the Laws of the Land are,
 That when any Man is hanged, and stolen off the
 Gallows, the Sheriff's Life and Goods are in the
 King's Hands: Now it happened while I was
 here, and warned me, the Thief was stolen; there-
 fore I pray, fair Lady, for the love of God, Give
 me your best Advice what to do. She answered,
 I have Compassion upon you, for by the Law
 you have lost your Life and Goods to the King,
 do now after my counsel, and ye shall lose neither.
 He answered, I am to you greatly bound, hoping
 to have good Comfort. She said, Will you then
 promise to make me your Wife? The Knight an-
 swered, Would God you were indeed so minded;
 but I fear you disdain to humble your self unto so
 poor a Knight. She said, I give you my Will
 there; and he gave her again his Will, and con-
 sented to be her Knight during his Life. Then
 said

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said she, We knowe such a day my Lord was buried, which for the Love of me died, take him out of the Sepulchre, and hang him up instead of the Thief. The Knight answered, Lady, your Counsel is very good; then went they and opened the Sepulchre and drew him out. The Knight answered unto the Lady, How shall we now do, because e'er the Thief was hanged, two of his Teeth were smitten out, and I fear me if that were perceived, I shall die the Death. Then the Lady said, Take a Stone and strike out two of his Teeth. The Knight answered, Madam that may not I do; for while he lived, he was my trusty Friend, and it should be to me great rebuke to do so dishonourable a Deed to his Body, being dead. She answered, For your Love I shall do it, and presently took a Stone and smote out two of his Teeth, and said to the Sheriff, Take him and hang him upon the Gallows like the Thief. The Knight said, I fear to do it, for the Thief, in taking, was wounded upon his Head, and he lacked his Ears. O Madam, God forbid that I do so to the dead Body that I loved so well in his Life. Then said she, Give me your Sword, and I shall, for your Love do it; and so took the Sword, and smote a manly Stroke on the Fore-head, and cut off his Ears; and when she had thus done, she said, Now hang him. Then the Knight answered, Yet I fear to hang him; for the Thief wanted both his Stones, and if he be searched and not found without, all my labour is lost. Then said she, I never saw Man so fearful, seeing the matter is so sure: Take a Knife, and cut off his Stones. And

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And he answered, That I may not do in any wise, and therefore, I pray you spare me, for I know what a Man is without his Stones. She said, For the Love of you I shall do it, and took the Knife and cut off her Husband's Stones, and said, Now take the Churl thus disfigured, and hang him up without dread: And they went both and hung the Body upon the Gallows; and so was the Sheriff delivered. Then said the Lady, Now ye are delivered from all Dangers by my Counsel, therefore I desire you (according to Promise) that ye wed me. The Knight said, I have made a Vow that I shall never wed other so long as I live, which I shall perform. Then he said, O, thou most shameful and worst of all Women! who would take thee to Wife? An honourable and loving Knight was thy Husband, who for a little Blood that he let issue out of thy Finger died. Now hast thou smitten out two of his Teeth, cut off his Ears and Stones, and made a great Wound in his Head; What Devil would marry thee? Therefore thou shalt never shame good Man more, I will rid thee of thy Life. And drew his Sword, and with one Stroke, smote off her Head.

Then the Master said unto the Emperor, My Lord, have you understood what I have said? He answered, Right well: Amongst all Women this was the worst, and the Knight rewarded her accordingly, that she should no more do shame. The Emperor said, Moreover good Master, might, I but hear my Son speak, I should have no care of my

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my self. Then said the Master, To Morrow you shall hear him speak, and he shall shew the Truth of all the Variances betwixt us and the Emperors, as I hope. And so took leaue of the Emperour, and departed.

How DIOCLESIAN, the Emperours Son complained on the Empress, and how he excused himself to her Complaint.

After that, all the Masters took Counsel how they should bring the Child out of Prison, and lead him to the Palace; so they went to the Child in Prison before mid-day, his Counsel to hear. To whom the Child said, What you will, shall please; but trouble not your selves how I shall answer, or what I shall say; for with joy I shall answer all that shall be demanded of me. When the Seven Wise Masters heard that, they were exceeding joyful, and cloathed him in Purple and Cloth of Gold; and two of the Masters went before him, one on his Right Hand, and another on his Left, and the other three followed him, and before all went twelve Men with Instruments of Musick, who brought him with great Melody to the Palace. When the Emperour heard the Melody, he demanded what it was? Then it was told him by the standers by, saying, Mighty Emperour, it is your Son which cometh before you, and before all your Lords, to speak and excuse himself of all that is laid to his charge. The Emperour said, That is good Tydings, if I might hear my Son speak. And when the Child was come into the Palace

Palace, he rode to his father, and said unto him,
 Hail my most Dear and Royal Father.
 And when the Emperor heard the voice of his
 Son, he was so glad, that for joy he fell to the
 Earth; but his Son halted to take up his Father
 again: And when he came to himself, then began
 the Son to declare the whole matter to his Fa-
 ther. And there came so great a multitude to the
 Palace to hear the Child speak, and the Noise of
 them was so great, that the Child could not be



heard. The Emperor considering that, caused Ho-
 ney to be thrown into the Streets, that the Peo-
 ple therewith should be husied out of the Palace,
 the better to hear the Child speak: but they re-
 garded not the Honey. When the Emperor per-
 ceived that, he commanded silence on pain of Death:

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And when they were all still, he began to speak as followeth: O, most dear Father, before I speak any thing, I entreat you, that the Empress, with all her Chamber-Maids may be present. So the Emperour commanded the Empress with all her Maids to come without delay. The Empress hearing that (in great fear) came with her Maids: and the Child had them to stand before the People on a row, that he might see them. Then said the Child, Sir, behold the Chamber-maid that standeth there in Green, (whom ye know the Empress loveth above all others) command her to be unclothed before us all, and see what she is. The Emperour said, Dear Son, that would shame us all, to have a Woman stand naked before us. He said, If it be a Woman it is my Shame; if not, let the Shame abide in her. When she was unclothed, she appeared to be a Man, whereat they wondered.

The Complaint of the Emperor's Son, on the Empress.

Then said the Son unto the Father, Behold this Ribauld hath many a Night lain with your Wife in your Chamber, and hath defiled your Bed, and him the Empress loved above all others, which thing you did not know.

When the Emperour had seen these things, he with great Indignation, gave command, that both the Empress and Ribauld should be burnt. But the

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the Son answered, My Lord and Father, make
no haste to give Judgment, till I have reproved
her for the grievous Slanders she did falsely accuse
me of, and declared how unjustly she hath com-
plained of me, and sought all Means how to take
my Life. Then said the Emperour, My dear Son,
I commit all the Judgment into your Hands.
The Son answered, If she be found a Liar the
Law shall give Sentence against her: but my Roy-
al Father, when you sent for me, at her earnest re-
quest, then I with my Masters beheld the Sorcery,
by which I perceived, that if I should have spoken
unto you, or any living Creature, within the space
of Seven Days, I should have died a most shame-
ful Death, and for that cause only I did forbear to
speak until this present.

And whereas the Empress most unjustly hath ac-
cused me, that I would have ravished her, therein
she lyeth falsely; for she most adulterously provo-
ked me to defile the Bed of my most gracious
Lord and Father the Emperour. And when she
in no wise could bring me thereto, she took Pen,
Ink, and Paper, and bade me write the Cause
wherefore I would not yield. And when I had
written the cause thereof, and how I would not
my Father's Orchard defile, then she began to
tear her Cloaths, and scratch her visage, so that
it gushed forth with Blood, and cryed with a loud
Voice, This your Son (having a Mind full of Lust)
would have wronged your Princely Bed, and I
relucting his Lusts, most inhumanely hath he com-
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my Flesh. When the Emperor heard this, he beheld her with a full Countenance, and said in this manner, O wretched Woman! Was not thy Rival sufficient to fulfil thy foul and lecherous Appetite, but wouldst thou have made my Son? Then fell the Empress at the Emperor's feet, and cryed for Mercy. The Emperor said, O thou cursed and unhappy Woman! Thou askest forgiveness, but art worthy of none, for thou hast deserved to die in three respects. First, In that thou hast committed Adultery. Secondly, In that thou most lasciviously hast provoked my Son to a most abominable Sin, and laid the Crime falsely and unjustly upon him. Thirdly and lastly, In that thou hast every Day incited me by thy false Tales to put my Son to Death. Therefore the Law shall have its course against thee, and condemn thee to Death as thou hast deserved.

Then answered his Son, Most Noble Father, you know well that for her Kissings I was daily led to hanging: But my Masters with the help of God hath delivered me. O my most honourable Lord and Father, it was told you by the Empress, that I should also (by the help of my Masters) depose you; and that I did labour by all Means to destroy you, and to sit in your Throne; Would you not then have much grieved? Have you not the whole Command and Government of this your Kingdom? Wherefore then should not I use all the skill I have, to help you, my most honoured Father, rather than any way to destroy

destroy you? And seeing from you I have my li-
ving, I will repute you my Sovereign Lord and
Father, during my Life; and not in any manner
deprive you of your Honour, but busie my self a-
bout governing the same, and all your Commands
I shall fulfil: But it is as the Father that cast his
Son into the Sea to drown him, because he said he
should live to be a greater Lord than his Father
was, and yet the Son by Providence was saved,
and became greater than his Father, and yet was
no hindrance to him, but profited them much. Al-
so you see, that my Life and Carriage is never like
to hinder you, but shall be to your Comfort. Then
said the Emperor, Blessed be the Almighty God,
and the Hour I begat thee, and desired such a
Son, that I find so expert in all things. Tell
me an Example, by which we may perfectly under-
stand thy Wisdom, and my Heart the better to en-
joy thee.

Then said the Son, Honourable Father, com-
mand silence to be made, that I may speak
till I have done: And when that is ended, give
Sentence according to Law upon me and the Em-
press. Then commanded the Emperor, Silence;
and the Child began to tell in ample manner, as
followeth:

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The Example of DIOCLESIAN the Emperor's Son.

There was a Knight which had but one Son, that he loved right dear in the beginning, as ye have loved me, whom he delivered to a Master that dwelt in a far Country, to be brought up in Learning and Knowledge. This Child as he waxed in Years, increased in Wisdom and Know-



ledge very much; and when he had been with his Master seven Years, his Father desired to see him, and sent Letters that he should come again into his Country, and visit his Friends, as you sent for me. The Child was obedient to his Father, and came:

came: at whose coming he did exceedingly Joy, for that he was grown as well in Comeliness of Body, as in Doctrine and Learning, and to every Man appeared pleasant and gentle.

It happened upon a Day, that the Father and Mother sitting at the Table, the Child serving them, a Nightingale came flying before the Window where they sat, and began to sing so sweetly, that they marvelled. And the Knight said, O how sweetly this Bird singeth! Well were it that I could understand his Song, and shew the Interpretation thereof. Then said the Son, My worshipful Father, the Song of this Nightingale I could declare, but I fear your displeasure. The Father said, Say boldly my Son the Interpretation of the Bird, and ye shall prove whether I be angry or not, but I shall mark well the cause of my Anger. When the Son heard that, he said, The Nightingale said in her Song, That I shall become a great Lord, honoured of all Men, namely of my Father, who shall bring me Water to wash, and my Mother shall hold the Towel. The Father said, Thou shalt never have such Service of us, nor such Dignity shall follow thee, and in great Madness and Woodness he took his Son upon his Shoulders, and ran to the Sea, and cast him in, and said, Lie there Interpreter. The Child could swim, and swimming to Land, where he was four Days without Meate or Drink. The fifth Day there came a Ship, and as the Child saw

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Now that the Ship-men had said, For the Love of God deliver me from Death. The Ship-men saw it was a fair young Man, and had compassion on him, and with the Boat fetched him a-board, and carried him into a far Country, and sold him to a Duke. The Child grew very proper and fair, and the Duke loved him, and had him greatly in favour.

Upon a time, the King of that Realm called all the great Lords and Noblemen within the Realm together, to sit in Council. This Duke then prepared to go to the said Council, and giving great regard to the Wisdom of the Child, took the Child with him. And when they were assembled before the King and his Council: My well-beloved Lords and Friends, said the King, will you know the Cause wherefore I have assembled you? They answered, We all are (Sovereign Lord) at your Command. Then said the King, It is a Secret that I will shew you: If any Man can declare what it signifieth, I swear unto him by my Crown, I will give him my only Daughter in Marriage, and he shall be my Fellow in the Realm so long as I live, and after my Death shall possess my whole Kingdom. And the Mystery is this:

Three Wabens follow me still wheresoever I go, crying out with such horrible Voices, that the pain is grievous for me to hear them, and much more to behold their Looks. Wherefore if there be any Man which knoweth the cause of this their earnest following of me, and can shew what they mean by their cry:

saying, I will shoot them away from me, without
 doubt I shall fulfill this promise that I have made.
 And as the King had thus said, there was none
 found in all the Council, that understood the
 cause, or could drive away the Ravens. There
 said the Child unto the Duke, My Lord, I think
 you the King will perform what he hath pro-
 mised. Will you, said the Duke, that I give
 the King knowledge of what you can do? Then
 the Child said, I will my life pledge that I
 shall make good what I have said. When the
 Duke heard that, he went to the King, and said,
 My Lord and King, here is a young Man, that
 doth promise to satisfy you in all that you de-
 sire, touching these Ravens, if you will faith-
 fully what you have promised. The King swore by
 the Crown of his Kingdom, that which I have
 promised, shall be fulfilled. Then he brought
 the Child before the King; and when the King
 beheld him, he spake unto him after this man-
 ner: O, fair Child, can you answer this my
 Question? The Child answered, Yea, my Lord,
 and that in the best manner. Your Question is,
 Wherefore the Ravens follow you, and horribly
 call upon you? To which I answer: It hap-
 ned, that there were two Ravens, a Male and
 a Female, that brought out between them
 a third Raven; and in that place there was
 a great famine, and scarcity of all manner of
 food, that Men, Beasts, and Fowls died for
 want. Now the third Raven was at that time
 very

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herp young, and not able to flye abroad, to get her living: The Female she left it, seeking how she might get her own living, and came no more to the Feast; the Male seeing that, with great penury and labour fed the young Raven till he was able to flye: And when the Deutch was gone, the Female Raven returned home again to the young Raven, and would accompany with him; but the Male seeing that, would have driven her away, saying, She in his great necessity left his company, and therefore now he should have no fellowship with her. She alledged, That she had in his hatching great labour and sorrow, and suffered much penury, and for that cause she should rather enjoy his company than the Male.

For this cause, my Sovereign Lord, they follow you, asking which of them shall have company with the young Raven; and this is the cause of this horrible clamour that they make daily unto you. But, my Honoured Lord, when you have given sentence, you shall never more be troubled with their crying. Then answered the King, Because the Female hath forsaken the young Raven in his necessity, it standeth with Justice, that she should not follow him, but do without his fellowship. And whereas she saith, That in hatching and bringing forth, she had great pain and travail, that helpeth not; for her pain was turned into joy, as soon as she saw the young Raven in the World. But in regard the Male is the cause of the Generation of every Beast of the Earth,

Earth, and every Fowl of the Air; and also be-
cause the young Raven in his necessity was su-
stained and fed by the Male, therefore I conclude,
both for judgment and Sentence definitive, that
the young Raven shall abide with the Male, and
not the Female.



When the Ravens heard that Sentence, with
great noise and cry they flew up into the Air,
and were no more seen in all the Region.

This done, the King demanded of the young
Man what his Name was? He answered, I am
called Alexander. Then said the King, I will
that you grant me one Request, which is, That
from henceforth you take me and none other for
your Father; for you shall have my Daughter to
Wife, and the whole Government and Posses-
sion

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God of his Realm. Young Alexander abode still there with the King, and every Man did accordingly love him; for he began to haunt Justice and Turneyes, wherein he always won the Prize before all other in Egypt, so that his Peer was not to be found; neither was there so hard a Question put to him, but he could make known the true sense and meaning thereof.

At that time there was an Emperour named Titus, who excelled in courage and curiosity all other Emperours, Kings, and Princes, in the world. Inasmuch that such Fame flew over the world of it, that whosoever would profit in cunning manners, or behaviour, must go to the Emperour's Court. When Alexander heard thereof, he said to the King, My most honourable Lord and Father, you know that the World is full of Fame of the Emperour, that it is very delectable to abide in his Court; wherefore, if it please you, my Renowned Lord and Father, I would very gladly go to his Court, that I may obtain more Wisdom, and grow more prompt in Manners and Behaviour than now I am. Whereupon answered the King, It pleaseth me right well; but take with you plenty of Gold and Silver, and other Necessaries, that you my Honour there may save, and have also that which to you is most requisite and necessary. And it seemeth unto me most expedient, that before your departure you do marry my Daughter.

Then

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Then answered Alexander, Will I please you
 to spare me at this time? And he
 returned I shall reward her with all honour when
 appearing. The King answered, Sir, it is
 your will to go unto the Emperor's Court. I
 give my Consent. Then Alexander took his leave
 of the King, and took with him abundance of
 Treasure, and went to the Emperor's Court;
 where, when he was come, with many follow-
 ers, he went before the Emperor, and fell upon
 his knees, and did him Reverence.

The Emperor rose from his Seat Imperial,
 and kissed him, and asked whence, and what he
 was, and wherefore he was come? He answered,
 I am Son and Heir to the King of Egypt, and
 am come to serve your most high Majesty, if it
 please you to accept of me. The Emperor said
 he was heartily welcome, and committed him
 to his Steward, and made him his Chamberlain. The
 Steward ordained him a fair Chamber, and pro-
 vided all things that were necessary to the same;
 and Alexander behaved himself so well, that in
 short time he was beloved of all People.

Not long after, came the King's Son of France
 to serve the Emperor, and to learn good Quali-
 ties, and comely Behaviour: Him the Emperor
 received honourably, demanding his Name: and
 of what Kindred he was come? He answered, I
 am Son to the King of France, and I have to Name
 Lodowick your Servant. Then said the Empe-
 ror, I have made Alexander my Chamberlain, and you
 shall

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shall be my Cup-bearer, that always ye may
serbe at my Table. And commanded the ~~Servants~~
to assign him a Lodging, whom he placed with
Alexander. These two were so like in Nature,
visage, and condition, that hardly the one might
be known from the other; but that Alexander
was more cunning than Lodowick, for he was
Feminine and Shame-faced: And these young
Men loved well.

The Emperoz had only one Daughter named
Florentine, right fair and gracious, that should
be his Heir, whom he loved entirely: She had a
Court and Servants assigned. To her the Em-
peroz every Day accustomed to send from his Ta-
ble, of his Dainties, in token of Love, by Alex-
ander, insomuch that the Daughter began to have
him marvellously in her favour, because of his
wise and comely Behaviour.

Upon a Day, Alexander had such Business that
he serbed not at the Table, nor any other in his
room: Lodowick perceiving that, serbed for him;
and as soon as he had serbed in his last Service
upon his Knee, the Emperoz commanded him to
bear a Dish to his Daughter, as he was wont,
thinking he was Alexander. Then Lodowick
went to the Emperoz's Daughter, saluting her
with great Reverence, and set the Meat before
her; till then he had not seen her. She percei-
ving it was not Alexander, said to him, What is
your Name? And whose Son are you? He answer-
ed her, Madam, I am the King's Son of France,
and

and my Dame is Lodowick. He said, I thank you for your pains, and then he departed. In the mean time came Alexander to the Table, and they fulfilled their Service.

Dinner being done, Lodowick went to Bed sore sick. Alexander perceiving that, went to his Chamber, and said unto him, O, my best beloved Friend and Fellow, how is it with you? And what is the cause of your Infirmitie? He answered, The cause I know not; but I am sore sick, and fear I cannot escape Death. Alexander said, the cause of your Infirmitie I know well; for to day, as you bear the Heat to the Emperors Daughter, ye beheld her Beauty so fervently, that your Heart was ravished with her Love. Whereupon he answered, O Alexander, all the Physicians in the World could not more truly judge my Sicknes, but I fear it will be my death. Then said Alexander, Be of good comfort, I will help you unto my power; and forthwith went to a Merchant, and bought with his own Money a fair Cloth, set with precious Stones, unknown to Lodowick, and presented it in his behalf to the Princess. As soon as she beheld it, she asked where he had that costly Cloth? He said, Madam, of the Son of the Most Christian King of France, who sendeth it you for your Love: For he having but once beheld your Princely Face, is grown sick even to death. Wherefore if you suffer him to perish, you will never recover Honour.

Then

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Then said she, Good Alexander should you
counsel me to lose my Virginity? God defend
that; and belure Alexander thus for such Shel-
lages you shall never win Thanks of me. There-
fore go out of my sight, and I peak not more there-
of. When Alexander heard that, he did Obe-
yance, and departed.

The next Day Alexander went again to the
City, and bought a Chaplet that was twice the
value of the Cloth, and went to the Princess's
Chamber, and gave it her in the behalf of Lodo-
wick. And when she saw that costly Gift, she
said unto him, I marvel that so often you have
been and spoken with me, and have not done
your own Errand in speaking for your self, but
for another. Then answered he, O Madam, I
have not done so, because my Birth is not to be
compared to yours; also my Heart was never so
wounded: And he that hath a good Fellow, is
bound for to do him true fellowship. And there-
fore now, Excellent Princess, of your most abun-
dant pity, have compassion on him, and make him
whole, that you have so sore wounded, that it be
not for ever laid to your Cruelty and hardness of
Heart. She answered him, Go your way, for at
this time I will give you no answer. And as he
heard that, he departed.

And the third Day he went to the City, and
bought a Girdle that was of more value, and
costlier than the Chaplet was, and presented it
to her in the behalf of Lodowick: And when she
beheld

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beheld that Gift so precious, she said unto Alexander, say to Lodowick, that he come to my Chamber about the third Hour in the Night, and he shall find the Door open. And Alexander hearing that, was glad, and went to his Fellow, and said, My best beloved Fellow, be of good Comfort, for I have conquered the Princess to you, and this Night I shall bring thee to her Chamber. And when that was said, he started up as though he had awaked out of his Sleep, and was well revived, and for great Joy became well. The next Night Alexander took Lodowick and brought him to the Chamber of the Lady, with whom he was in Solace all Night. And from that time forth all her Mind was upon him, so that there was but one Love between them both.

And after that, Lodowick used many times to visit her; so that in process of time, it came to the Ears of the Knights and Gentlemen of the Court, how that the Emperors Daughter was known by Lodowick: And they conspired among themselves how they might find and intrap him, so as to take him. As Alexander had knowledge thereof, he armed him to withstand them; and when the Knights understood that, they feared Alexander, and suffered his Fellow to go in peace. Alexander many times put himself in jeopardy for him, he not knowing thereof; but the Princess knew it well.

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In short time after, came Letters to Alexander, of the death of the King of Egypt, that he should hastily come and receive his Kingdom with Honour and Joy; and that shewed he unto the Princess, and to Lodowick, and also of his departing; wherefore they were sorrowful. He said also to the Emperour, My honourable Lord, please it you to understand, I have received Letters of the death of my Father; wherefore it behobeth me to go and receive the Kingdom, and that you will be pleased to give me leave to depart; and for all the Benefits to me done, I offer my self and all my Goods; and rather than I should by my going any way displease you, my Lord, I will forsake all my Realm, and abide with you still.

Then said the Emperour, Know you for certain, that for your departure I am right heavy; for you were the best Servant in my Court: But it becometh not an Emperour to hinder his Servants from their Advancements, but rather promote them to higher Honour; therefore go you unto our Treasurer, and he shall deliver you as much Gold as you will have, and in the Name of God (and my Blessing) go into your Country. And thus Alexander had leave of the Emperour, and bade him farewell: And they were also sorrowful for his Departure; for he was beloved of all.

Lodowick, with the Princess, brought him on his way Seven Miles at least; after that, Alexander would not suffer them to go any further. Then

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Then fell they both to the Ground with great heaviness. And Alexander took and lifted him up, and comforted him with fair Words, and said, O Lodowick, my best beloved fellow! I warn you that the Secrets betwixt you and my Lady, you hide as privily as you may, and take good heed to all things; for I wot another should come and be in my stead, that shall endy you of the Favour and Grace that you stand in with the Emperour, and Day and Night shall lie in wait to take you in a fault, and to put you to rebuke. Then answered Lodowick, and said, O Alexander, I shall beware as much as is possible: But how shall I do, when I shall want your Company? Therefore one thing I shall desire of you, that you take this Ring of me for a remembrance. Then said he, I shall, for the Love of you, gladly receive your Ring; and yet I shall never without the Ring forget you. And so he committed them both to God. Then they embraced each other about the Neck, kissed, and departed.

Not long after, the King's Son of Spain, named Guido, was received of the Emperour in the room of Alexander; to whom the Steward assigned Alexander's Chamber, the which was very sore against the Will of Lodowick, but he could not help it.

Guido seeing that Lodowick, against his Will, had him in his Fellowship, he grew envious against him; so Lodowick for a long time, for fear of the same Guido, kept him from the company

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of the Lady: Nevertheless afterwards being overcome with her Love, sometimes he went again unto her as before. Guido perceiving the same, waited so long thereon, that he knew the truth, and was therefore certain, that the Princess was by Lodowick known, and he had Company with her.

Upon a time it happened that the Emperour stood in the Hall, and praised Alexander for his Gentleness and Wisdom. Guido hearing that, said, My Lord, he is not so worthy to be commended as you imagine, for he hath a long time been a Traytor in your House. Then the Emperour said, Tell me how? Guido said, You have but one only Daughter, which shall be your Heir, and her Lodowick hath defiled through the help of Alexander; and he goeth to her every Night as it pleaseth him. As soon as the Emperour heard thereof, he was sore moved, and Lodowick happened to come through the Hall; and as the Emperour saw him, he said, What hear I of thee, thou untrue Body? If it be proved, thou shalt die the most shamefullest Death that can be devised. Lodowick said, My Lord, what is the cause? Guido answered, I deposed here before my Lord, that thou hast defiled his only Daughter, and every night dost Fornication with her; and with Battel I shall make it good upon thy Body, with my Body. Then said Lodowick, I am innocent, and falsely thou dost belye me, and thereupon I hold the Battel, and trust to God thy falshood shall come upon thine own Head. Then the Emperour
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assigned them the Day of Combat. That done, Lodowick went unto the Lady, and shewed her the Cause, and the Day of Battel, by the Emperour assigned, and in what manner Guido had accused him; and said unto her, Now it becometh me to have your counsel, or else I must die; for you know it would not avail me to have gain-said the Battel, without I should have yielded my self guilty. Guido is hardy, that his like is none but Alexander, and I am feeble; and therefore if I fight the Battel against him, I were but a dead Man; and so you shall abide rebuke. Then said she, Follow my counsel, in that you mistrust your self: Go hastily unto my Father, and say, We have received Letters, whereby you are assured that the King your Father is sore sick, and lieth upon his Death-Bed, and he desireth to speak with you in Person, and to dispose of his Kingdom before he departeth this Life. So desire him to give you leave, for the Love of your Father, to go to visit him, and that he will prolong the Day of Battel, that in the mean season you may go and come. And when you have gotten leave, as hastily as you can, secretly go to King Alexander, and take him a-part, and shew him the cause of your coming, and desire him in this Extremity, and he will help and save us.

When Lodowick heard this Counsel, it pleased him well, and he did according: And having obtained leave, and respite of the Battel assign-

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ed, he departed towards Egypt, and never stayed till he came unto King Alexander's Castle. When King Alexander understood his coming, he was very glad, and went to meet him, receiving him honourably, and wondering much at his coming.

Then said Lodowick, O my dear Lord, and best beloved friend, my Life and Death is in your Hands; for as you said before, that I should have another fellow which should lie in wait, to espy me, and destroy me, without I looked more wisely to my self. So long as I could, I did abstain from her; but afterwards the King's Son of Spain watched me till he perceived the Truth: In the end, he accused me to the Emperour; so that on the eighth, from this Day, I must be ready to fight with him Body against Body; and ye know he is a very strong hardy Man, and I am weak and feeble: Therefore hath Florentine counselled me, That I should not hide this Matter from you; for she knoweth you to be a faithful friend that would not leave us in this necessity.

Then said Alexander, Is there any that knoweth of your coming unto me, besides Florentine? He answered him, No creature living; for I took leave of the Emperour, to go visit my Father lying grievously sick. Then Alexander asked him, What Counsel hath Florentine given you? And how might I help you? He said, O my Faithful friend, thus she hath counselled me. Considering that we be like each other, you should come and personate
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the Battel, and no one would know you, but she ; and the Battel done, I would come again to the Court, and you return unto your own Country. Then he asked him, when the Battel should be ? And he said, Eight Days hence.

Then said Alexander, If I but one Day tarry before I depart, I cannot come by the Day prefixed, tell me what I shall do : I have bidden all my Subjects, that to Morrow they should come to my Wedding ; and if I should go, then is the Day lost ; if I go not to the Battel, then Florentine and you are undone : What think you is best ? When Lodowick heard that, he fell to the Earth, and began to sorrow without measure, saying, Sorrow comes suddenly to me on all sides ! Then said Alexander, Be of good comfort, for I shall not forsake you, though I should lose my Life and Kingdom ; but hear what I have thought upon : Seeing we are both alike, so that the one cannot be known from the other ; and as for me, I am not rightly known here, but my Barons, and other my Subjects, will take you for me : Therefore you shall here abide, and marry my Wife in my stead, and hold the Feasts and Nuptials, and do all things as if my self were present ; but when you come to Bed with my Wife, look you there be true and faithful, and I shall without tarrying, take my Horse, and ride where the Battel shall be ; and if God give me Victory, I will come again secretly, and you shall go again unto your best beloved. This done, Alexander

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bade Lodowick farewell, and took his Journey towards the Emperors Court to fight the Battel with Guido; and Lodowick tarried in Egypt instead of King Alexander.

Next Morning came Lodowick, as though he had been King Alexander, and solemnly, in the face of the Church, he espoused King Alexander's Wife, and solemnized the Marriage-feast with great Royalty of Delicacies and Dainties, plenty of all Wine, and divers Instruments of Musick with great joy and cheer, for the Noblemen, and all others that were there assembled. And when the Night was come, he went to Bed with the Queen, and laid between him and her a naked Sword; whereat she wondring, but saying nothing: And so he lay with her every Night while Alexander was gone.

Now King Alexander, at the Day prefixed, came unto the Emperors, and said, O most Sovereign Lord, I have left my Father very sick, and in hazard of Death; nevertheless I am come to perform my Promise, with a full Resolution to defend my Honour. The Emperors said, We do honourably, and according to the valour of a Nobleman; and fortune shall favour you (I hope) in your righteous Quarrel.

And when the Emperors Daughter understood that Alexander was come, she sent for him; and when he came to her, she courteously embraced him, and with great joy kissed him, and blessed the time that she saw him again, and demanded

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ed where he had left her Love Lodowick? Then he declared unto her the whole Circumstances, and how he had left him King in his Realm. So he took his leave of her, and went to Lodowick's Chamber, no Creature thinking but that he was Ledowick, except Florentine only. The next Day before Alexander went to the Battel, he said unto the Emperor, in the presence of Guido, My most renowned Sovereign Lord, Guido hath falsely accused me unto your Noble Grace, in saying that I should be so familiar with the Princess your most vertuous and only Daughter, to the great dishonour of your Noble Person, and hers: I swear by the Holy Evangelist, that she was never in any wise known by me, as he hath alledged unto you, which I shall make good

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good upon his Body with the aid and help of God.

Then answered Guido, Yet once I say again, and swear by the Holy Evangelists, and by all that God hath made, that thou hast had knowledge of, and defiled the Emperors Daughter, and that I will make good upon thy Head.

Whereupon they leapt upon their Coursers, and ran so fiercely one at another, with their Spears, that they both broke and shivered in pieces: Then they drew their Swords, and fought so long, until at last Alexander with great might, at one stroke, smote off Guido's Head, and sent it unto the Emperors Daughter; whereof she was glad, and bare it unto her Father, and said, Father, behold the Head of him that had so falsely defamed you and me.

When the Emperour perceived the Victory, he sent for Alexander, whom he thought to be Lodowick, and said, O Lodowick, this Day your Honour and my Daughters you have saved, you shall be to Morrow in my Favour, and whosoever shall again defame you, shall for ever stand in my Indignation.

Then answered Alexander, God always helpeth them that trust in him, and revengeth Wrong done to the Innocent: But most renowned Lord, one thing I intreat, that it will please you to give me leave to go see how it standeth with my Father, whom I left sore sick, and if he be any thing amended, I shall incontinently return. Then
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the Emperoz said, That pleaseth me; but you may in no wise leave me, for I cannot be without your presence.

Alexander having taken leave of the Emperoz, with all speed he could, he rode back unto his Realm. Lodowick having heard of his return, with much Joy met him, and friendly received him, saying, Most true Friend of all Friends, tell me how Fortune has laboured you in this your Journey and Business, and to what end have you brought it? Then he said, Go to the Emperoz and serve him as before, for I have gotten you more Favour at his Hands than you had before, and have also cut off the Head of your greatest Enemy.

Then said Lodowick, You have not only at this time saved my Life, but preserved me heretofore, which Kindness I shall never forget, neither, as yet, can I requite; but God reward you. And so he departed to the Emperoz's Court, and there was no Man that had any knowledge of the absence of King Alexander, except Lodowick.

When Night was come, he went to Bed to the Queen; and so soon as he was laid, he began sweetly to embrace her, and with friendly Words he kissed her. Then said she, You have made this time tedious, in that you have shewed nothing of Friendship or Love, How may this be? Then said he, Wherefore say you that? She said, Every Night you have laid betwixt us a naked Sword, and have never turned towards me till now

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now. And when he heard that, he thought on the truth of his fellow, and said, O, my dear Lady! it was not done for any ill will, but for trial of Love. But she said to her self, That Love you shall have no more, but despite, and I will be revenged upon thee.



Then there was a Knight that she had a little loved, and she began to love him more and more, till at the last they sought how they might destroy the King, and therefore they got Poison and poisoned him, so that if he had not been of strong Complementation he had died thereof; for it wrought so sore, that it caused him to be a most foul and horrible Leper, as ever was seen upon the Earth. The Lords and Noblemen of the said Realm, and the Queen also seeing this, despised

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despised him, and said, It behoveth not a Leper to reign over us, for he cannot beget any beautiful Heirs. And so he was deposed of his Dignity Royal, and driven out of his Realm.

In the mean time died the Emperour of Rome, and Lodowick married his Daughter; and after that Lodowick's Father died; so that Lodowick reigned both Emperour of Rome and King of France at once.

When King Alexander heard of that, he thought in himself, Now my Fellow reigneth, and ruleth both the Empire of Rome, and the Realm of France, to whom may I go better than unto him, for whom I have often ventured already? And took with him his Staff and Clapper, and went towards the Emperour's Country.

And when he was come nigh the Gate, he sat down among other poor Lazars, expecting the giving of Alms; and upon a sudden, as the Emperour went out of the Palace, all the poor Lazars began to ring their Clappers, and good King Alexander did as the other: But there was no Alms given him; so he tarried until the Emperour was set and served at the Table.

Then went King Alexander unto the Gate, and knocked; and the Porter asked who was there? Alexander answered him, I am a poor despised Man, I pray you, for the Love of God turn your Sight from my Misage; but for the Reward of God do my Message unto the Emperour. He asked what was the matter? Alexander said, Go
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and tell him here is a Lazar right horrible ugly to see, which prayeth him, for the Love of God and King Alexander, that he will grant him this Day to eat his Alms before him upon the Earth in his Hall. The Porter answered, I wonder you dare desire that of my Lord, for all the Hall is full of Lords and Noblemen, and if they should behold you, they would abhor their Meat; but forasmuch as you have required it of me solemnly for the Love of God, I shall do your errand, whatsoever happeneth. And so he went and did his Message to the Emperor. When the Emperor heard the Porter name Alexander King of Egypt, he said to the Porter, Go thy ways and bring him before me, how horrible and ugly soever his Visage be, and ordain him a place before me, that he may eat in my presence.

The Porter brought him immediately, and ordained him a place, and set him to Meat before the Emperor; and when he had well refreshed himself, he said unto one of the Emperor's Servants, My dear Friend, do me this Errand unto the Emperor; Say unto him, That I pray him, for the Love of God, and King Alexander, that he will send me his Cup full of Wine. The Servant said, For the Love of God I will do it, but I believe it will not be; for if you should but touch my Lord's Cup he will by no Means drink of the same again. Nevertheless he did the Errand.

And when the Emperoz heard him name King Alexander, he commanded his Cup to be filled of the best Wine, and carried to him, which Wine when he had receiued, he put into his Bottle, and took the Ring that Lodowick had given him, and put it into the Cup, and sent it again unto the Emperoz.

When the Emperoz saw the King, he instantly knew that it was the same he had given unto King Alexander, in Friendship, when he departed from him, and thought in his Heart that King Alexander had been dead, or else that this Man very strangely came by the King, and commanded presently, That the Lazar should not depart till he had spoken with him; for in no wise could he have any knowledge of him, nor yet repute him for Alexander.

After Dinner was done, the Emperoz took the sick Man a-part, and asked him how he came by that Ring? King Alexander demanded if he knew the Ring? The Emperoz said, I know it well. Alexander said, Wot you also to whom you gave it? The Emperoz said, I wot right well how it is. Then said Alexander, How is it that you know not me, for I am Alexander, unto whom you gave the same. When the Emperoz heard that, he fell to the Ground for Sorow, and tore his Robes, and with many sighings and bewailings, said, O Alexander! you are the one half of my Soul. How is your goodly and delicate Body now so unclean and infected, that was so faire and pleasant to behold!

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behold ! He answered, This is happened unto me for the great Fidelity you have done me in the Bed with my Wife, when you laid a naked Sword betwixt you and her ; wherefore she became wroth and hated me, so that she and a Knight that in former time she had loved, have poisoned me as you see, and driven me out of my Realm.

And when the Emperour heard that, he took him about the Neck and kissed him, and said, O my most dear and entirely beloved Brother ! I sorrow to see you in this great perplexity. I would to God I might die for you ! But, my most dear Friend ! suffer patiently a little time, till we have sent for all the wise Masters in Physick, to have their Advice, if there be any Remedy to be had, or hope of Recovery of your Health ; and if it be possible to help you, we shall neither spare Lordship, Empire, nor any other Goods Temporal, to make you whole and sound.

In the mean time, he was brought into a faire Chamber, richly furnished with all things requisite for his Ease and Health. Then in all haste he sent Messengers through all parts of the World, for the most expert Physicians that might be found, of which, within a Month after, were assembled before the Emperour, Thier that were expert and skilful in that Science ; to which the Emperour said, My well beloved Masters, I have a Friend that is very grievously afflicted with a foul Leprosie, whom I would very gladly see healed, and made as sound and whole as ever he

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was, sparing neither for Gold or Silver, or any other cost whatsoever, so that he might recover his Health again. Then answered the Masters, all this is possible to be done in Physick, you shall soon understand, after we have seen the Person: And when they saw him, they knew the cause of his Infirmitie, and said it was incurable for all Physicians living.

When the Emperour heard that, he was right sorry, and committed it to Almighty God, calling unto him most of the Religious Men that dwelt near the Court; and a number of good People, besides many other devout Persons, desiring them earnestly to make Prayers unto Almighty God, that he would vouchsafe of his infinite Goodness, to make whole his dear Friend King Alexander. And he himself (with many others) fasted and prayed to Almighty God, for the speedy recovery of his Friend.

Now upon a time, as King Alexander was at his Prayers, there came unto him a Voice from Heaven, saying, Tell Lodowick the Emperour, that if he, with his own Hands, will slay those two Children which his Empress had at one burthen, and with the Blood of them wash and bathe thy Body, thy Flesh shall become as fair and as clear as the Bodies of these little Children; if not, thou must never look to be cured whilst Breath is in thy Body; and so farewell.

Now when King Alexander had heard this strange Voice, he began to think with himself
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what it was, and whence it came. Then he replied unto himself, This Vision is not to be shewed; for it is contrary to humane Nature, that any Man should lay his own Sins for the Recovery of a Stranger.

The Emperour continu'd night and day in Prayer with great Devotion, earnestly praying to God for King Alexander, never ceasing, until a Voice came unto him, and said, How long will you thus call and cry unto me! when it was openly shewed unto King Alexander, by what Means he might recover his Health, and his Body become clear without either Spot or Blemish.

The Emperour hearing that Voice, he went to King Alexander, and said unto him, Of all Friends the best and most true, blessed be the most high and everlasting God, who never faileth them that put their trust in him, of whom I have knowledge, that it is shewed unto you, how you may be recovered of your Leprosie; wherefore I entreat you that you will plainly lay open unto me how it may be done, for the restoring of your former Health, that we may have Joy together; and if you need any thing that may do you good, I will fulfil it unto my power; yea, and for your Health give all that I have.

Alexander said, Sir, I dare not shew you how I may be cured of my Leprosie, for it exceedeth, and it is a thing against Nature, therefore I will not as yet shew it you, howbeit I have great trust and confidence in you.

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The Emperoz said, Alexander put your trust in me still; whatsoever is possible to be done for recovering your Health, I will do it; and therefore conceal nothing from me, I pray you.

Then said Alexander, I have of God knowledge, That if you will slay your two Sons with your own Hands, and wash me in their Blood, I shall be whole, therefore I have not shewed it unto you: For methinks it is against Nature, that the Father should slay his own Children for the Health of a Stranger. The Emperoz said, Say not that you are a Stranger, for I love you as my self, and therefore if I had ten Children, I should not spare one for your Health.



Afterwards the Emperoz espied his time when the Emperess was out of the way, and went
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into the Chamber where the Children slept, and drew his Knife and cut both their Throats; and gathered the Blood into a Vessel, and then bathed Alexander therewith: And when he was bathed, his Body was as fair and clean as though it had been a Young Child. Then the Emperour, having perfect knowledge of his Misage, and told him, saying, O, good Alexander! now I see you in the same form I have oftentimes delighted in.

Blessed be Almighty God, that ever I had these Children, by whom your Health is restored, and your Body made pure and clean. And as yet none had knowledge of the Death of these Children, save the Emperour and Alexander.

And when the Emperour saw that good King Alexander was perfectly healed, he said unto him, I will ordain you an honourable Company, and you shall go hence about five Miles; and the next Day send me a Messenger, and let me know the Day of your return. And I shall then with great solemnity come and meet you, and you shall remain with me until I may conveniently provide for the recovery of your Realm.

This Counsel pleased King Alexander well, and was performed: For on the next day following there came a Messenger to the Emperour, certifying him of the return of King Alexander.

When the Emperours heard these Tidings, they rejoiced, and said unto the Emperour, O my best beloved Lord, have you not just cause to rejoyce, seeing Alexander King of Egypt is now coming to see

see you, whom of long time you have not seen ? If you please to go and meet him with your Lords and Gentlemen, I shall follow with my Ladies and Gentlewomen. And as yet she knew not of the Death of her two Children.

Then rode the Emperor and Empress with a great Company of Lords and Ladies to meet with good King Alexander : And when they met, with great Reverence they received him, and with great Joy brought him unto the Palace ; and at the time of Dinner, Alexander was placed between the Emperor and Empress, and all the Mirth and Cheer that she could make, she shewed unto him.

When the Emperor saw that, he was glad, and so exceedingly well pleased, that he said, O mine own Florentine, it glads me above all things that you make unto King Alexander so good Cheer. Then answered the Empress. Wherefore should I not ? Is not his Company unto us more precious than Gold and Silver ? But unto you, my renowned Lord, much more ; for by his Means you attain'd unto so great Honour and Dignity, and by him many times you have been saved from Death. The Emperor answered, Then I pray you, dearly beloved Florentine, heed my Words : Saw you not that deformed Lazar, which Yesterday sat before our Table, and prayed me for the Love of God and good King Alexander, that I would give him Drink ? She said, My honourable Lord, I saw him well ; a more horrible

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Man I never beheld. Then said the Emperour, I demand of you: But the case he were King Alexander, and that he could not be made whole but with the Blood of your two Sons, which you in one Day brought into the World, would you that their Blood should be shed, that he might bathe himself therein, and therefore have perfect Health, and comely Fabour, as you now see him have? She answered, My renowned Lord and Husband, wherefore demand you of me that Question? I tell you of a truth, that if I had ten Sons I should gladly lay them with my own hands, to prepare for him a Bathe, and would wash him therein my own self, rather than I should leave him in such a loathsome and miserable Case, so horrible to behold, and in such danger of Health withal; God might send us more Children, but such a Friend were a thing impossible for us ever hereafter to find throughout the whole World.

When the Emperour heard this, he was well pleased and said, O my loving Empress, had you rather have your Children dead, than Alexander should languish in his Leprosie? Then I shall shew you the whole truth of the matter. That foul Lazar which you saw, was Alexander, that sitteth hereby us, and is made whole with the Blood of our two Sons, and they are dead.

As soon as the Empress heard that, she began with extremity of Sorrow mournfully to cry out, as Nature would she should, although she had

had said before, She had rather see her Children dead than Alexander remain in such Misery.

The Nourishers of the Children understanding this, presently, with great crying, ran to the Nursery; and great bewailing was made through the Emperors Court for his two Sons, and when the Nourishers came to the Chamber, they found the Children playing, and singing a Song of Praise and Thanksgiving, to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for restoring their Lives. Then they returned with all haste unto the Emperor and Empress, and shewed unto them how the Children were living, and that about their Throats where they were cut, they had Circles of Gold: whereof were great Joy and Gladness in all the Court, with Thanksgiving to Almighty God for that exceeding great Miracle and wonderful Work.

After that, the Emperor with a great Multitude assembled together went with King Alexander into Egypt, and set him again in possession of his Realm. The Queen and the Knight, who had lived long together in Adultery, he caused to be slain. And when this was done, the Emperor had one only Sister, whom he married unto King Alexander.

When King Alexander had obtain'd all his Realm again, and was set in rest and peace, the Emperor returned unto his Empire, and King Alexander so wisely and politicly governed himself in his Affairs, that he overcame his rebellious Enemies.

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And when he was seated in his Glory, Peace, and Might, he thought upon his Father and Mother (by whom he was cast into the Sea, who dwelled in far parts) and sent a Messenger, to let them know, that the King of Egypt upon such a Day would be with them to view those parts of the Country, and to sport himself, and to make a Royal Feast. When the Messenger was there come, they received him with Honour, bountiful Entertainments, and large Gifts, and sent him back, saying, That their Services should be ready at all times to do the King's Pleasure; but that they could not possible discern that he should vouchsafe them that Honour, wherof they were not worthy, as to visit them in those parts, to sport himself there a while.

The Messenger returned and shewed the King how willingly they would receive him, and in what manner they did reward him, and how faithful they were and ready to do him service, wherewith the King was well pleased. When the set Day was come, the King with a fair Company rode towards his Father's House, who was to his Father and Mother unknown.

When the King came near his Father's Castle the Knight rode joyfully to meet him, and when he came nigh to the King, he alighted, and did him reverence upon his Knees: But the King took him up presently, and commanded him to take Horse again, and so they rode together unto the Castle.

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And when they were come thither, the Mother came unto him, and fell upon her Knees, and welcomed him gladly; and the King took her up as lovingly, and kissed her. She said unto him, My Lord, you do us (unworthy) this Honour with the Presence of your most honourable Personage, which we shall never be able to deserve.

After the Meat was all ready, and the time of Day was come to go to Dinner, the Father came with a Basin and Twer, and the Mother with a Towel, saying, Sir, all things are ready, pleaseth it you to wash? And when the King saw that, he smiled, and said to himself, Now is the Song of the Nightingale true, that my Father and my Mother should gladly do as I have said, if my self would thereunto consent. But he would not suffer them to do him any such Service, saying, Your Age is to be honoured; and therefore I would have none of it. And then he called one of his Servants, whom he commanded to do that Service. Then said the Knight, You will not suffer us to do it for our Honour, because we are not worthy thereof. The King said, Have I not said, that for your Age I forbear you? When the King was late at the Table, he set his Mother on the Right Hand of him, and his Father on the Left: And then, as much as they might or durst, did behold his favour and countenance.

After Dinner, the King entered into a fair Chamber, and made the Knight with his Lady
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to follow him, and commanded all others to hold their Presence.

When they were all alone, the King said, Have you no Children? They answered, We have neither Son nor Daughter. And the King said, Had you never any? The Knight answered, We had one Son, but he is long ago dead. The King asked of what death he died? And the Knight said, A natural Death. Then the King said, If I find it otherwise, you are found in a most horrid fault. Then asked the Knight, My most Honourable and Renowned Lord, Wherefore enquire you so earnestly after our Son? The King answered, Not without just cause; and therefore I must and will know of what death he died: If you will not tell me, I shall cause you both to die most shameful Deaths.

When they heard that, they fell upon the Ground on their Knees before him, and asked his pardon and forgiveness. But the King would not suffer them to kneel, but took them up, and said, To that intent I came not unto your House, to eat your Bread, and to betray you. But say to me the very truth, and you shall be pardoned; for it is given me to understand, that you have put him to death; and if that you be found culpable therein, and come to judgment, you must die a most shameful death. Then said the Knight, My most Honourable Lord, save my Life, and I will shew you the very truth. The King said, Fear not, for I shall do you no harm. Then answered the Knight, and said, Most dread Sovereign Lord,

we had a Son that was Wise, Learned, and Intelligent ; and upon a time, as he stood before us, and served at the Table, there came to the Window a Nightingale that sung exceeding sweetly, whose Song he began to interpret, and to tell us what it meant, and said, This Bird singeth, that I shall become so great and mighty a Lord, that you my Father shall be glad to hold a Basin with Water to wash my Hands, and my Mother a Towel, that if I will suffer it.

And when I heard that, I was sore moved, and vexed in my Mind ; and so I took him upon my Shoulder, and cast him into the Sea for to drown him. Then said the King, What evil had come to you, if he had been made so great ? Methinks it should have been for your Honour and Profit. The Knight said, My Renowned Lord, it was for no Reason, but Woodness. The King answered, 'Twas a great Folly in you, that you would do against the Ordinance of God. And now you shall know for truth, I am your Son that you cast into the Sea, and God of his great Mercy hath saved me, and by his Grace brought me to this Estate and Dignity.

The Father and Mother hearing that, with fear and Joy amazed, fell flat unto the Ground, whom he lovingly took up, saying, Fear not, but rather rejoyce, for you shall suffer no harm ; but my Exaltation shall be to your glory and profit : And so he kiss'd his Father and Mother with great joy. Then began the Mother to weep greatly ;

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The Seven Wise

greatly; and the King said to her, Leave off your sorrowing, and be of good cheer, for in my Realm you shall be honoured above me, during my Life. And he took them with him into his Kingdom, where they dwelled a long time in Honour and Joy, and ended their Days with Comfort and Love of all the People.

Here follows the Application of the Example to the purpose.

Then said Dioclesian, the Emperors Son, Lord, have you understood what I have said? The Emperors said, Right well. Then said the Son, My most Honoured and Redoubted Father, altho' that God hath given and endued me with Wisdom and Understanding above others, that shall not be an impairing of your Honour and Might, but more for the preservation and maintenance of the same: So in like manner, the Kings Excellent Majesty, which was nothing to the hindrance of the Father; but this rather for his Majesty, Profit, and greater Comfort. For as long as they lived, it was in very great joy and mirth that they were loved of the People, and honoured of the Kingdom. Then said the Emperors, My beloved Son, I will wholly resign all the Empire unto you, to govern and rule, for I perceive well by your Narration that you have to me declared, that it is best for me, and most for my ease, that I now leave this worldly and tedious Business, and the labour and care of a King, and betake me

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me to my rest and ease, for I am old and feeble. Then answered the Son, and said unto his Father, My most honourable Lord and Father, so shall it be, but as long as you live, you shall have the Authority and Government of the Empire at your Command, as it appertaineth unto an Emperor; but in all the Businesses that are laborious and troublesome, I will always be ready to minister any service that possible I can, according to my bounden Duty.

How Judgment was given upon the Empress, and how that she and her Lover were both put to Death.

Then the Emperor commanded the Judges and Justices to sit in Judgment, and to bring again the Empress before them, with the Ladies, and also the Kitauld, her best beloved, cloathed in the Vesture and Habit of a Woman, whom he did cause to stand next unto the Empress. Then the Emperor's Son asked Sentence and iust Judgment upon them; saying, My most honourable Lord and Father, even as you are Emperor of the World, and that your Majesty and Power requirerth to do true Justice unto all your Subjects that desire it; so now I demand, that you this Day do give right Sentence and true Judgment upon the untruth, falsehood, and shame, which were put and alledged unto me by the Empress; for the which Accusations, I have been
some.

The Seven Wise

Sometimes led unto the Gallows, and have stood in great jeopardy, and peril of my Life, and also that she hath been to you untrue of her Body, as you have seen by good Proof made before you; and on the which I ask Judgment: and therefore command your Justices and Judges to give Sentence thereupon, according to Right, Equity and Law.

As soon as the Emperors heard this, she fell flat to the Earth before the Emperor, and asked Mercy and Forgiveness for her just Offence and Misdouing: But it helped not, profited nothing; for the Son would have Right, and desired Judgment. Then spake the Judges and Justices, Her own Misdouings condemn her, and the report of her Le-man by her kept and found: Therefore we give Sentence against the Emperors, That she shall be bound to a Horse's Tail, and drawn through all the Streets of the City to the place of Execution, and there be burnt. We Judge and give Sentence against the Ribauld, That he shall be quartered and smitten in pieces, and his flesh cast to the Hounds, and Birds of the Air to devour him. And this Sentence was approbated and allowed of by the People.

Hereafter in short time died the Emperor, and Dioclesian his Son governed and ruled the Empire with great Wisdom, and always held and kept his Masters with him in great Honour and Glory. By whose Counsel and Wisdom he governed the Empire, and he excelled all his Predecessors

celloys in Riches, and doing Right and Justice ;
and his Masters so loved him above all others in the
World, that many times they put themselves in
great peril and jeopardy of their Lives for him.
And so ended their Days in Joy and Honour, to
the Praise of Almighty G D D.

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